ADVENTURES

OF

CALEB WILLIAMS.

VOL. I.

BRITISH MUSEUM
69
OCT

THINGS AS THEY ARE;

OR, THE

ADVENTURES

OF

CALEB WILLIAMS.

BY WILLIAM GODWIN.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

Amidſt the woods the leopard knows his kind;
The tyger preys not on the tyger brood:
Man only is the common foe of man.

DUBLIN:
PRINTED FOR JOHN RICE,
No. 2, COLLEGE-GREEN.
1795.

BRITISH MUSEUM
OCT
69

THE

ADVENTURES

OF

CALEB WILLIAMS.

CHAP. I.

My life has for ſeveral years been a theatre of calamity. I have been a mark for the vigilance of tyranny, and I could not eſcape. My faireſt proſpects have been blaſted. My enemy has ſhown himſelf inacceſſible to intreaties and untired in perſecution. My fame, as well as my happineſs, has become his victim. Every one, as far as my ſtory has been known, has refuſed to aſſiſt me in my diſtreſs, and has execrated my name. I have not deſerved this treatment. My own conſcience witneſſes in behalf of that innocence my pretenſions

to which are regarded in the world as incredible. There is now however little hope that I ſhall eſcape from the toils that univerſally beſet me. I am incited to the penning of theſe memoirs, only by a deſire to divert my mind from the deplorableneſs of my ſituation, and a faint idea that poſterity may by their means be induced to render me a juſtice which my cotemporaries refuſe. My ſtory will at leaſt appear to have that conſiſtency, which is ſeldom attendant but upon truth.

I was born of humble parents in a remote county of England. Their occupations were ſuch as uſually fall to the lot of peaſants, and they had no portion to give me but an education free from the uſual ſources of depravity, and the inheritance, long ſince loſt by their unfortunate progeny! of an honeſt fame. I was taught the rudiments of no ſcience, except reading, writing and arithmetic. But I had an inquiſitive mind, and neglected no means of information from converſation or books. My improvement was greater than my condition in life afforded room to expect.

Our reſidence was within the manor of Ferdinando Falkland, a country ſquire of conſiderable opulence. At an early age I attracted the favourable notice of Mr. Collins, this gentleman's ſteward, who uſed to call in occaſionally at my father's. He obſerved the particulars of my progreſs with approbation, and made a favourable report to his maſter of my induſtry and genius.

In the ſummer of the year Mr. Falkland viſited his eſtate in our county after an abſence of ſeveral months. This was a period of misfortune to me. I was then eighteen years of age. My father lay dead in our cottage. I had loſt my mother ſome years before. In this forlorn ſituation I was ſurpriſed with a meſſage from the ſquire, ordering

ordering me to repair to the manſion-houſe the morning after my father's funeral.

Though I was not a ſtranger to books, I had no practical acquaintance with men. I had never had occaſion to addreſs a perſon of this elevated rank, and I felt no ſmall uneaſineſs and awe on the preſent occaſion. I found Mr. Falkland a man of ſmall ſtature, with an extreme delicacy of form and appearance. In place of the hard-favoured and inflexible viſages I had been accuſtomed to obſerve, every muſcle and petty line of his countenance ſeemed to be in an inconceivable degree pregnant with meaning. His manner was kind, attentive and humane. His eye was full of animation, but there was a grave and ſad ſolemnity in his air, which for want of experience I imagined was the inheritance of the great, and the inſtrument by which the diſtance between them and their inferiors was maintained. His look beſpoke the unquietneſs of his mind, and frequently wandered with an expreſſion of diſconſolateneſs and anxiety.

My reception was as gracious and encouraging as I could poſſibly deſire. Mr. Falkland queſtioned me reſpecting my learning, and my conceptions of men and things, and liſtened to my anſwers with condeſcenſion and approbation. This kindneſs ſoon reſtored to me a conſiderable part of myſelf-poſſeſſion, though I ſtill felt reſtrained by the graceful, but unaltered dignity of his carriage. I have already ſaid that I was not unacquainted with books. I had not failed to derive advantage from the opportunities which offered themſelves, and ſome of thoſe opportunities were of very fortunate occurrence. But it is not my purpoſe to draw out this narrative by unneceſſary detail; I leave the reader to collect what my acquiſitions had been from the incidents which followed. When

Mr. Falkland had ſufficiently ſatisfied his curioſity, he proceeded to inform me that he was in want of a ſecretary, that I appeared to him ſufficiently qualified for that office, and that, if in my preſent change of ſituation occaſioned by the death of my father I approved of the employment, he would take me into his family.

I felt highly flattered by the propoſal, and was warm in the expreſſion of my acknowledgements. I ſet eagerly about the diſpoſal of the little property my father had left, in which I was aſſiſted by Mr. Collins. I had not now a relation, upon whoſe kindneſs and interpoſition I had any direct claim, in the world. But far from regarding this deſerted ſituation with terror, I formed golden viſions of the ſtation I was about to occupy. I little ſuſpected that the gaiety and lightneſs of heart I had hitherto enjoyed were upon the point of leaving me for ever, and that the reſt of my days were devoted to miſery and alarm.

My employment was eaſy and agreeable. It conſiſted partly of the tranſcribing and arranging certain papers, and partly of writing from my maſter's dictation letters of buſineſs, as well as ſketches of literary compoſition. Many of theſe latter conſiſted of an analytical ſurvey of the plans of different authors, and conjectural ſpeculations upon hints they afforded, tending either to the detection of their errors or the carrying forward their diſcoveries. All of them bore powerful marks of a profound and elegant underſtanding, well ſtored with literature, and poſſeſſed of an uncommon ſhare of activity and diſcrimination.

My ſtation was in that part of the houſe which was appropriated for the reception of books, it being my duty to perform the functions of librarian as well as ſecretary. Here my hours would have glided in tranquillity and peace, had not my ſituation

tion included in it circumſtances totally different from thoſe which attended me in my father's cottage. In early life my mind had been almoſt wholly engroſſed by reading and reflexion. My intercourſes with my fellow mortals were occaſional and ſhort. But in my new reſidence I was excited by every motive of intereſt and curioſity to ſtudy my maſter's character, and I found in it an ample field for ſpeculation and conjecture.

His mode of living was in the utmoſt degree recluſe and ſolitary. He had no inclination to ſcenes of revelry and mirth. He avoided the buſy haunts of men; nor did he ſeem deſirous to compenſate for this privation by the confidence of friendſhip. He appeared a total ſtranger to every thing which uſually bears the appellation of pleaſure. His features were ſcarcely ever relaxed into a ſmile, nor did that air which beſpoke the unhappineſs of his mind, at any time forſake them. Yet his manners were by no means ſuch as denoted moroſeneſs and miſanthropy. He was compaſſionate and conſiderate for others, though the ſtatelineſs of his carriage and the reſerve of his temper were at no time interrupted. His appearance and general behaviour might have ſtrongly intereſted all perſons in his favour; but the coldneſs of his addreſs and the impenetrableneſs of his ſentiments ſeemed to forbid thoſe demonſtrations of kindneſs to which one might otherwiſe have been prompted.

Such was the general appearance of Mr. Falkland; but his temper was extremely unequal. The diſtemper which afflicted him with inceſſant gloom, had its paroxyſms. Sometimes he was haſty, peeviſh and tyrannical; but this proceeded rather from the torment of his mind than an unfeeling diſpoſition, and, when reflexion recurred, he appeared willing that the weight of his misfortune ſhould

ſhould fall wholly upon himſelf. Sometimes he entirely loſt his ſelf-poſſeſſion, and his behaviour was changed into frenzy. He would ſtrike his forehead, his brows became knit, his features diſtorted, and his teeth ground one againſt the other. When he felt the approach of theſe ſymptoms, he would ſuddenly riſe, and, leaving the occupation whatever it was in which he was engaged, haſten into a ſolitude upon which no perſon dared to intrude.

It muſt not be ſuppoſed that the whole of what I am deſcribing was viſible to the perſons about him; nor indeed was I acquainted with it in the extent here ſtated, but after a conſiderable time, and in gradual ſucceſſion. With reſpect to the domeſtics in general, they ſaw but little of their maſter. None of them, except myſelf from the nature of my functions, and Mr. Collins from the antiquity of his ſervice and the reſpectableneſs of his character, approached Mr. Falkland, but at ſtated ſeaſons and for a very ſhort interval. They knew him only by the benevolence of his actions and the principles of inflexible integrity by which he was ordinarily guided; and, though they would ſometimes indulge their conjectures reſpecting his ſingularities, regarded him upon the whole with veneration as a being of a ſuperior order.

One day when I had been about three months in the ſervice of my patron, I went into a cloſet or ſmall apartment which was ſeparated from the library by a narrow gallery that was lighted by a ſmall window near the roof. I had conceived that there was no perſon in the room, and went only to put any thing in order that I might find out of its place. As I opened the door, I heard at the ſame inſtant a deep groan expreſſive of intolerable anguiſh. The ſound of the door in opening ſeemed to alarm the perſon within; I heard the lid of a cheſt

cheſt haſtily ſhut, and the noiſe as of faſtening a lock. I immediately conceived that Mr. Falkland was there, and was going haſtily to retire; but at that moment a voice that ſeemed ſupernaturally tremendous exclaimed, Who is there? The voice was Mr. Falkland's. The ſound of it thrilled my very vitals. I endeavoured to anſwer, but my ſpeech failed, and being incapable of any other reply, I inſtinctively advanced within the door into the room. Mr. Falkland was juſt riſen from the floor upon which he had been ſitting or kneeling. His countenance betrayed ſtrong ſymptoms of confuſion. With a violent effort however theſe ſymptoms ſuddenly vaniſhed, and inſtantaneouſly gave place to a countenance ſparkling with rage. Villain, cried he, what has brought you here? I heſitated a confuſed and irreſolute anſwer. Wretch, interrupted Mr. Falkland with uncontrolable impatience, you want to ruin me. You ſet yourſelf as a ſpy upon my actions. But bitterly ſhall you repent your inſolence. Do you think you ſhall watch my privacies with impunity? I attempted to defend myſelf. Begone, devil! rejoined he. Quit the room, or I will trample you into atoms. Saying this, he advanced towards me. But I was already ſufficiently terrified, and vaniſhed in a moment. I heard the door ſhut after me with violence, and thus ended this extraordinary ſcene.

I ſaw him again in the evening, and he was then tolerably compoſed. His behaviour, which was always kind, was now doubly attentive and ſoothing. He ſeemed to have ſomething of which he wiſhed to diſburthen his mind, but to want words in which to convey it. I looked at him with anxiety and affection. He made two unſucceſsful efforts, ſhook his head, and then, putting five guineas into my hand, preſſed it in a manner that I could feel proceeded from a mind pregnant with various

various emotions, though I could not interpret them. Having done this, he ſeemed immediately to recollect himſelf, and to take refuge in the uſual diſtance and ſolemnity of his manner.

I eaſily underſtood that ſecrecy was one of the things expected from me, and indeed my mind was too much diſpoſed to meditate upon what I had heard and ſeen, to make it a topic of indiſcriminate communication. Mr. Collins however and myſelf happened to ſup together that evening, which was but ſeldom the caſe, his avocations obliging him to be much abroad. He could not help obſerving an uncommon dejection and anxiety in my countenance, and affectionately enquired into the reaſon. I endeavoured to evade his queſtions, but my youth and ignorance of the world gave me but little advantage for that purpoſe. Beſide this, I had been accuſtomed to view Mr. Collins with conſiderable attachment, and I conceived from the nature of his ſituation that there could be but ſmall impropriety in making him my confident in the preſent inſtance. I repeated to him minutely every thing that had paſſed, and concluded with a ſolemn declaration that, though treated with caprice, I was not anxious for myſelf: no inconvenience or danger to myſelf ſhould ever lead me to a puſillanimous behaviour; and I felt only for my maſter, who, with every advantage for happineſs, and being in the higheſt degree worthy of it, ſeemed fated to undergo unmerited diſtreſs.

In anſwer to my communication Mr. Collins informed me that ſome incidents of a nature ſimilar to that which I related had fallen under his own knowledge, and that from the whole he could not help concluding that our unfortunate patron was at times diſordered in his intellects. Alas, continued he, it was not always thus! Ferdinando

Falkland

Falkland was once the gayeſt of the gay. Not indeed of that frothy ſort, who excite contempt inſtead of admiration, and whoſe levity argues thoughtleſsneſs rather than felicity. His gaiety was always accompanied with dignity. It was chaſtened with reflexion and ſenſibility, and never loſt ſight either of good taſte or humanity. Such as it was however, it denoted a genuine hilarity of heart, gave an inconceivable brilliancy to his company and converſation, and rendered him the perpetual delight of the diverſified circles he then willingly frequented. You ſee nothing of him, my dear Williams, but the ruin of that Falkland, who was courted by ſages, and adored by the fair. His youth, diſtinguiſhed in its outſet by the moſt generous promiſe, is tarniſhed. His ſenſibility is ſhrunk up and withered by events the moſt diſguſtful to his feelings. His mind was fraught with all the rhapſodies of viſionary honour; and in his ſenſe nothing but the groſſer part, the mere ſhell of Falkland, was capable to ſurvive the wound that his pride has ſuſtained.

Theſe reflexions of my friend Collins ſtrongly tended to inflame my curioſity, and I requeſted him to enter into a more copious explanation. With this requeſt he readily complied; as conceiving that whatever delicacy it became him to exerciſe in ordinary caſes, it would be out of place in my ſituation, and thinking it not improbable that Mr. Falkland, but for the diſturbance and inflammation of his mind, would be diſpoſed to a ſimilar communication. I ſhall join to Mr. Collins's ſtory various information which I afterwards received from other quarters, that I may give all poſſible perſpicuity to the ſeries of events. To the reader it may appear at firſt ſight as if this detail of the preceding life of Mr. Falkland were foreign to my hiſtory. Alas, I know from bitter experi-

ence that it is otherwiſe. My heart bleeds at the recollection of his misfortunes as if they were my own. How can it fail to do ſo? To his ſtory the whole fortune of my life was linked; becauſe he was miſerable, my happineſs, my name, and my exiſtence have been irretrievably blaſted.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

AMONG the favourite authors of his early years were the heroic poets of Italy. From them he imbibed the love of chivalry and romance. He had too much good ſenſe to regret the times of Charlemagne and Arthur. But, while his imagination was purged by a certain infuſion of philoſophy, he conceived that there was in the manners depicted by theſe celebrated poets, ſomething to imitate, as well as ſomething to avoid. He believed that nothing was ſo well calculated to make men delicate, gallant and humane, as a temper perpetually alive to the ſentiments of birth and honour. The opinions he entertained upon thoſe topics were illuſtrated in his conduct, which was aſſiduouſly conformed to the model of heroiſm that his fancy ſuggeſted.

With theſe ſentiments he ſet out upon his travels at the age at which the grand tour is uſually made, and they were rather confirmed than ſhaken by the adventures that befel him. By inclination he was led to make his longeſt ſtay in Italy, and here he fell into company with ſeveral young noblemen whoſe ſtudies and principles were congenial to his own. By them he was aſſiduouſly courted and treated with the moſt diſtinguiſhed applauſe. They were delighted to meet with a foreigner who had imbibed all the peculiarities of the moſt liberal and honourable among themſelves. Nor was he leſs favoured and admired by the ſofter ſex. Though his ſtature were ſmall, his perſon had an air of uncommon dignity. His dignity was then heightened

heightened by certain additions which were afterwards obliterated, an expreſſion of frankneſs, ingenuity and unreſerve, and a ſpirit of the moſt ardent enthuſiaſm. Perhaps no Engliſhman was ever in an equal degree idoliſed by the inhabitants of Italy.

It was not poſſible for him to have drank ſo deeply of the fountain of chivalry without being engaged occaſionally in affairs of honour, all of which were terminated in a manner that would not have diſgraced the chevalier Bayard himſelf. In Italy the young men of rank divide themſelves into two claſſes, thoſe who adhere to the pure principles of ancient gallantry, and thoſe who, being actuated by the ſame acute ſenſe of injury and inſult, accuſtom themſelves to the employment of hired bravoes as their inſtruments of vengeance. The whole difference indeed conſiſts in the precarious application of a generally received diſtinction. The moſt generous Italian ſtill conceives that there are certain perſons whom it would be contamination to call into the open field. He nevertheleſs believes that an indignity cannot be expiated but with blood, and is perſuaded that the life of a fellow creature is a very trifling conſideration in compariſon with the indemnification to be made to his injured honour. There is therefore ſcarcely any Italian that would upon ſome occaſions ſcruple aſſaſſination. Men of ſpirit among them, notwithſtanding the prejudices of their education, cannot fail to have a ſecret conviction of its baſeneſs, and will be deſirous of extending as far as poſſible the cartel of honour. Real or affected arrogance teaches others to regard almoſt the whole human ſpecies as their inferiors, and of conſequence incites them to gratify their vengeance without danger to their perſons. Mr. Falkland fell in with ſome of theſe. But his undaunted ſpirit and

and reſolute temper gave him a deciſive advantage even in ſuch perilous rencounters. One inſtance among many of his manner of conducting himſelf among this proud and high-ſpirited people, it may be proper to relate. Mr. Falkland is the principal agent in my hiſtory; and Mr. Falkland, in the autumn and decay of his vigour ſuch as I found him, cannot be completely underſtood without a knowledge of his previous character as it was in all the gloſs of youth, yet unaſſailed by adverſity, and unbroken in upon by anguiſh or remorſe.

At Rome he was received with particular diſtinction at the houſe of marquis Piſani, who had an only daughter, the heir of his immenſe fortune, and the admiration of all the young nobility of that metropolis. Lady Lucretia Piſani was tall, of a dignified form and uncommonly beautiful. She was not deficient in amiable qualities, but her ſoul was haughty, and her carriage not unfrequently contemptuous. Her pride was nouriſhed by the conſciouſneſs of her charms, by her elevated rank and the univerſal adoration ſhe was accuſtomed to receive.

Among her numerous lovers count Malveſi was the individual moſt favoured by her father, nor did his addreſſes ſeem indifferent to her. The count was a man of conſiderable accompliſhments, and of great integrity and benevolence of diſpoſition. But he was too ardent a lover to be able always to preſerve the affability of his temper. The admirers, whoſe addreſſes were a ſource of gratification to his miſtreſs, were a perpetual torment to him. Placing his whole happineſs in the poſſeſſion of this imperious beauty, the moſt trifling circumſtances were capable of alarming him for the ſecurity of his pretenſions. But moſt of all he was jealous of the Engliſh cavalier. The marquis

Piſani,

Piſani, who had ſpent many years in France, was by no means partial to the ſuſpicious precautions of Italian fathers, and indulged his daughter in conſiderable freedoms. His houſe and his daughter, within certain judicious reſtraints, were open to the reſort of male viſitants. But above all Mr. Falkland, as a foreigner, and a perſon little likely to form pretenſions to the hand of Lucretia, was received upon a footing of great familiarity. The lady herſelf, conſcious of her innocence, entertained no ſcruple about trifles, and acted with the confidence and frankneſs of one who is ſuperior to ſuſpicion.

Mr. Falkland, after a reſidence of ſeveral weeks at Rome, proceeded to Naples. Mean while certain incidents occurred that delayed the intended nuptials of the heireſs of Piſani. When he returned to Rome count Malveſi was abſent. Lady Lucretia, who had been conſiderably amuſed before with the converſation of Mr. Falkland, and who had an active and enquiring mind, had conceived in the interval between his firſt and ſecond reſidence at Rome a paſſion for learning the Engliſh language, inſpired by the lively and ardent encomiums of our beſt authors that ſhe had heard from their countryman. She had provided herſelf with the uſual implements for that purpoſe, and made ſome progreſs during his abſence. But upon his return ſhe was deſirous of making uſe of the opportunity which, if miſſed, might never occur again with equal advantages, of reading ſelect paſſages of our poets in company with an Engliſhman of uncommon taſte and capacity.

This propoſal neceſſarily led to a more frequent intercourſe. When count Malveſi returned, he found Mr. Falkland eſtabliſhed almoſt as an inmate of the Piſani palace. His mind could not fail to be ſtruck with the criticalneſs of the ſituation. He

was

was perhaps ſecretly conſcious that the qualifications of the Engliſhman were ſuperior to his own, and he trembled for the progreſs that each of them might have made in the affection of the other, even before they were aware of the danger. He believed that the match was in every reſpect ſuch as to flatter the ambition of Mr. Falkland, and he was ſtung even to madneſs by the idea of being deprived of the object deareſt to his heart by this inſolent upſtart.

He had however a ſufficient ſhare of diſcretion to go firſt to demand an explanation of lady Lucretia. She in the gaiety of her heart trifled with his anxiety. His patience was already exhauſted, and he proceeded in his expoſtulation in language that it was by no means poſſible for her to endure with apathy. Lady Lucretia had always been accuſtomed to deference and ſubmiſſion; and having got over ſomething like terror that was firſt inſpired by the imperious manner in which he was now catechiſed, her next feeling was that of the warmeſt reſentment. She diſdained to ſatisfy ſo inſolent a queſtioner, and even indulged herſelf in ſome oblique hints calculated to ſtrengthen his ſuſpicions. For ſome time ſhe deſcribed his folly and preſumption in terms of the moſt ludicrous ſarcaſm, and then ſuddenly changing her ſtyle, bid him never let her ſee him more except upon a footing of the moſt diſtance acquaintance, as ſhe was determined never again to ſubject herſelf to ſo unworthy and inexcuſable a treatment. She was happy that he had at length diſcloſed to her his true character, and would well know how to profit of her preſent experience to avoid a repetition of the ſame danger. All this paſſed in the full career of the paſſions on both ſides, and lady Lucretia had no time to reflect what might be the conſequence of having thus exaſperated her lover.

Count

Count Malveſi left her in all the torments of hell. He believed that this was a premeditated ſcene to find a pretence for breaking off an engagement that was already all but concluded; or rather his mind was racked with a thouſand conjectures, he alternately thought that the injuſtice might be hers or his own, and he quarrelled with lady Lucretia, himſelf and all the world. In this temper of mind he haſtened to the hotel of the Engliſh cavalier. The moment of expoſtulation was now over, and he found himſelf irreſiſtibly impelled to juſtify his precipitate conduct with the lady, by taking for granted that the proſperous amours of Falkland were beyond the reach of doubt.

Mr. Falkland was at home. The firſt words of the count were an abrupt accuſation of duplicity in the affair of lady Lucretia, and a challenge. The Engliſhman had an unaffected eſteem for Malveſi, who was in reality a man of conſiderable merit, and who had been one of Mr. Falkland's earlieſt Italian acquaintance, they having originally met at Milan. But more than this, the poſſible conſequences of a duel in the preſent inſtance burſt upon his mind. He had the warmeſt admiration for lady Lucretia, though his feelings were not thoſe of a lover: and he knew that, however her haughtineſs might endeavour to diſguiſe it, ſhe was impreſſed with a tender regard for count Malveſi. He could not bear to think that any miſconduct of his ſhould interrupt the proſpects of ſo deſerving a pair. Guided by theſe ſentiments he endeavoured to expoſtulate with the Italian. But all his attempts in this reſpect were ineffectual. His antagoniſt was drunk with choler, and would not liſten to a word that tended to check the impetuoſity of his thoughts. He traverſed the room with perturbed ſteps, and even foamed with anguiſh and fury. Mr. Falkland, finding that every thing

elſe

elſe was to no purpoſe, told the count that, if he would return tomorrow at the ſame hour, he would attend him to any ſcene of action he would think proper to ſelect.

From count Malveſi Mr. Falkland immediately proceeded to the palace of Piſani. Here he found a conſiderable difficulty in appeaſing the indignation of lady Lucretia. Honour forbad him to diſcloſe the cartel he had received, though he was ſecretly determined never to draw his ſword in the preſent quarrel; otherwiſe that diſcloſure would immediately have operated as the ſtrongeſt motive with this diſdainful beauty. But, though ſhe feared a ſimilar defiance, yet the vague apprehenſion was not ſtrong enough to induce her without qualification to ſurrender all the ſtatelineſs of her reſentment. Mr. Falkland however drew ſo intereſting a picture of the diſturbance of count Malveſi's mind, and accounted in ſo flattering a manner for the abruptneſs of his conduct, that this, together with the arguments he adduced, completed the conqueſt of lady Lucretia's reſentment. Having thus far accompliſhed his purpoſe, he proceeded to diſcloſe to her every thing that had paſſed.

The next day count Malveſi appeared, punctual to his appointment, at Mr. Falkland's hotel. Mr. Falkland came to the door to receive him, but requeſted him to enter the houſe for a moment, as he had ſtill an affair of three minutes to diſpatch. They proceeded to a parlour. Here Mr. Falkland left him, and preſently returned leading in lady Lucretia herſelf adorned in all her charms, and thoſe charms heightened upon the preſent occaſion with a conſciouſneſs of the ſpirited and generous condeſcenſion ſhe now exerted. Mr. Falkland led her up to the aſtoniſhed count; and ſhe, gently laying her hand upon the arm of her lover, exclaimed with the moſt attractive grace, Will you allow

allow me to retract the precipitate haughtineſs into which I was betrayed? The enraptured count, ſcarcely able to believe his ſenſes, threw himſelf upon his knees before her, and ſtammered out a reply, ſignifying that the precipitation had been all his own, that he only had any forgiveneſs to demand, and, though they might pardon, he could never pardon himſelf for the ſacrilege he had committed againſt her and this god-like Engliſhman. As ſoon as the firſt tumults of his joy were ſubſided, Mr. Falkland addreſſed him thus:

"Count Malveſi, I feel the utmoſt pleaſure in having thus by peaceful means diſarmed your reſentment, and effected your happineſs. But I muſt confeſs you put me to a ſevere trial. My temper is not leſs impetuous and fiery than your own, and it is not at all times that I ſhould have been thus able to ſubdue it. But I conſidered that in reality the original blame was mine. Though your ſuſpicion was groundleſs, it was not abſurd. We have been trifling too much in the face of danger. I ought not, under the preſent weakneſs of our nature and forms of ſociety, to have been ſo aſſiduous in my attendance upon this enchanting woman. It would have been little wonder, if, having ſo many opportunities, and playing the preceptor with her as I have done, I had been entangled before I was aware, and harboured a wiſh which I might not afterwards have had the courage to ſubdue. I owed you an atonement for this imprudence.

"But the laws of honour are in the utmoſt degree rigid, and there was reaſon to fear that, however anxious I were to be your friend, I might be obliged to be your murderer. Fortunately the reputation of my courage is ſufficiently eſtabliſhed, not to expoſe it to any impeachment by my declining your preſent defiance. It was lucky however

ever that in our interview of yeſterday you found me alone, and that accident by that means threw the management of the affair entirely into my diſpoſal. If the tranſaction ſhould become known, the concluſion would now become known along with the provocation, and I am ſatisfied. But, if the challenge had been public, the proofs I had formerly given of my courage would not have excuſed my preſent moderation; and though deſirous to have avoided the combat, it would not have been in my power. Let us hence each of us learn to avoid haſte and indiſcretion, the conſequences of which may be inexpiable but with blood; and may heaven bleſs you in a conſort of whom I deem you every way worthy!"

I have already ſaid that this was by no means the only inſtance in the courſe of his travels in which Mr. Falkland acquitted himſelf in the moſt brilliant manner as a man of gallantry and virtue. He continued abroad during ſeveral years, every one of which brought ſome freſh acceſſion to the eſtimation in which he was held, as well as to his own impatience of ſtain or diſhonour. At length he thought proper to return to England, with the intention of ſpending the reſt of his days at the reſidence of his anceſtors.

CHAP. III.

FROM the moment of his taking a ſtep like this, dictated as it probably was by an unaffected principle of duty, his misfortunes took their commencement. All I have farther to ſtate of his hiſtory is one uninterrupted perſecution of a malignant deſtiny, a ſeries of adventures which ſeemed to take their riſe in various accidents, but pointing to one termination. Him they overwhelmed with an anguiſh he was of all others leaſt qualified to bear; and theſe waters of bitterneſs, extending beyond him, powered their deadly venom upon others, I myſelf being the moſt unfortunate of their victims.

The perſon in whom theſe calamities principally originated, was Mr. Falkland's neareſt neighbour, a man of eſtate equal to his own, by name, Barnabas Tyrrel. This man one might at firſt have ſuppoſed of all others leaſt qualified from inſtruction, or inclined by the habits of his life, to interfere with and diſturb the enjoyments of a mind ſo richly endowed as that of Mr. Falkland. Mr. Tyrrel might have paſſed for a true model of the Engliſh ſquire. He was very early left under the tuition of his mother, a woman of very narrow capacity, and who had no other child. This mother ſeemed to think that there was nothing in the world ſo precious as her hopeful Barnabas. Every thing muſt give way to his accommodation and advantage; every one muſt yield the moſt ſervile obedience to his commands. He muſt not be teaſed or reſtricted by any forms of inſtruction; and

and of conſequence his proficiency even in the arts of writing and reading was extremely ſlender. From his birth he was muſcular and ſturdy; and, confined to the *ruelle* of his mother, he made much ſuch a figure as the whelp-lion that a barbarian might have given for a lap-dog to his miſtreſs. But he ſoon broke looſe from theſe trammels, and formed an acquaintance with the groom and the game-keeper. Under their inſtruction he proved as ready a ſcholar as he had been indocile and reſtive to the pedant who held the office of his tutor. It was now evident that his ſmall proficiency in literature was by no means to be aſcribed to want of capacity. He diſcovered no contemptible ſagacity and quick-wittedneſs in the ſcience of horſe-fleſh, and was eminently expert in the arts of ſhooting, fiſhing and hunting. Nor did he confine himſelf to theſe, but added the theory and practice of boxing, cudgel-play and quarter-ſtaff. Theſe exerciſes added tenfold robuſtneſs and vigour to his former qualifications. His ſtature, when grown, was ſomewhat more than ſix feet, and his form might have been ſelected by a painter as a model for that hero of antiquity, whoſe proweſs conſiſted in felling an ox with his fiſt, and then devouring him at a meal. Conſcious of his advantage in this reſpect, he was inſupportably arrogant, tyrannical to his inferiors, and inſolent to his equals. The activity of his mind, being diverted from the genuine field of utility and diſtinction, ſhowed itſelf in the rude tricks of an overgrown lubber. Here, as in all other qualifications, he roſe above his competitors; and, if it had been poſſible to overlook the callous and unrelenting diſpoſition in which they were generated, you would not have denied your applauſe to the invention theſe freaks diſplayed, and the rough, ſarcaſtic wit with which they were accompanied.

Mr.

Mr. Tyrrel was by no means inclined to permit theſe extraordinary merits to reſt in oblivion. There was a weekly aſſembly at the neareſt market-town, the reſort of all the rural gentry. Here he had hitherto figured to the greateſt advantage, as grand maſter of the *cotérie*, no one among them having an equal ſhare of opulence, and the majority, though ſtill pretending to the rank of gentry, greatly his inferiors in this eſſential article. The young men in this circle looked up to this inſolent baſhaw with timid reſpect, conſcious of the comparative eminence that unqueſtionably belonged to the powers of his mind; and he well knew how to maintain his rank with an inflexible hand. Frequently indeed he relaxed his features, and aſſumed a temporary appearance of affableneſs and familiarity; but they found by experience, that, if any one, encouraged by his condeſcenſion, forgot the deference which Mr. Tyrrel conſidered as his due, he was ſoon taught to repent his preſumption. It was a tyger that thought proper to toy with a mouſe, the little animal every moment in danger of being cruſhed by the fangs of his ferocious aſſociate. As Mr. Tyrrel had a conſiderable copiouſneſs of ſpeech and a rich but undiſciplined imagination, he was always ſure of an audience. His neighbours crowded round, and joined in the ready laugh, partly from obſequiouſneſs, and partly from unfeigned admiration. It frequently happened however that in the midſt of his good humour a characteriſtic refinement of tyranny would ſuggeſt itſelf to his mind. When his ſubjects, encouraged by his familiarity, had diſcarded their precaution, the wayward fit would ſeize him, a ſudden cloud overſpread his brow, his voice transform from the pleaſant to the terrible, and a quarrel of a ſtraw immediately enſue with the firſt man whoſe face he did not like. The pleaſure that reſulted to others

others from the exuberant ſallies of his imagination was therefore not unalloyed with ſudden qualms of apprehenſion and terror. It may be believed that this deſpotiſm did not gain its final aſcendancy without being conteſted in the outſet. But all oppoſition had been quelled with a high hand by this rural Antæus. By the aſcendancy of his fortune, and his character among his neighbours, he always reduced his adverſary to the neceſſity of encountering him at his own weapons, and did not diſmiſs him without making him feel his preſumption through every joint in his frame. The tyranny of Mr. Tyrrel would not have been ſo patiently endured, had not his colloquial accompliſhments perpetually come in aid of that authority which his rank and proweſs originally obtained.

The ſituation of our ſquire with the fair was ſtill more enviable than that which he maintained among perſons of his own ſex. Every mother taught her daughter to conſider the hand of Mr. Tyrrel as the higheſt object of her ambition. Every daughter regarded his athletic form and his acknowledged proweſs with a favourable eye. As no man was adventurous enough to conteſt his ſuperiority, ſo hardly any woman in this provincial circle would have ſcrupled to prefer his addreſſes to thoſe of any other admirer. His boiſterous wit had peculiar charms for them; and there was no ſpectacle more flattering to their vanity than the ſeeing this Hercules exchange his club for a diſtaff. It was pleaſing to them to conſider that the fangs of this wild beaſt, the very idea of which inſpired trepidation into the boldeſt hearts, might be played with by them with the utmoſt ſecurity.

The arrival of Mr. Falkland gave a dreadful ſhock to the authority of Mr. Tyrrel. The diſpoſition of the former by no means inclined him to withhold himſelf from ſcenes of faſhionable reſort;

and

and he and his competitor were like two ſtars fated never to appear at once above the horizon. The advantages that Mr. Falkland poſſeſſed in the compariſon are palpable; and, had it been otherwiſe, the ſubjects of his ruſtic neighbour were ſufficiently diſpoſed to revolt againſt his mercileſs dominion. They had hitherto ſubmitted not from love, but fear; and, if they had not actually rebelled, it was only for want of a leader. Even the ladies regarded Mr. Falkland with particular complacence. His poliſhed manners were admirably in uniſon with feminine delicacy. The ſallies of his wit were far beyond thoſe of Mr. Tyrrel in variety and vigour; in addition to which they had the advantage of having their ſpontaneous exuberance guided and reſtrained by the ſagacity of a cultivated mind. The graces of his perſon were enhanced by the elegance of his deportment; and the benevolence and liberality of his temper were upon all occaſions conſpicuous. It was common indeed to Mr. Tyrrel together with Mr. Falkland to be little acceſſible to ſentiments of awkwardneſs and confuſion. But for this Mr. Tyrrell was indebted to a ſelf-ſatisfied effrontery and a boiſterous and over-bearing elocution by which he was accuſtomed to diſcomfit his aſſailants; while Mr. Falkland, with great ingenuity and candour of mind, was enabled, by his extenſive knowledge of the world and acquaintance with his own reſources, to perceive almoſt inſtantaneouſly the proceeding it moſt became him to adopt.

Mr. Tyrrel contemplated the progreſs of his rival with uneaſineſs and averſion. He often commented upon it to his particular confidents as a thing altogether inconceivable. Mr. Falkland he deſcribed as an animal that was beneath contempt. Diminutive and dwarfiſh in his form, he wanted to ſet up a new ſtandard of human nature adapted to his

his own miſerable condition. He wiſhed to perſuade people that the human ſpecies were made to be nailed to a chair, and to pore over books. He would have them exchange thoſe robuſt exerciſes which made us joyous in the performance and vigorous in the conſequences, for the wiſe labour of ſcratching our heads for a rhyme and counting our fingers for a verſe. Monkeys were as good men as theſe. A nation of ſuch animals would have no chance with a ſingle regiment of the old Engliſh votaries of beef and pudding. For his own part he never ſaw any thing come of learning but to make people foppiſh and impertinent; and a ſenſible man would not wiſh any worſe calamity to the enemies of his nation than to ſee them run mad after ſuch pernicious abſurdities. It was impoſſible that people could ſeriouſly feel any liking for ſuch a ridiculous piece of goods as this outlandiſh, foreign-made Engliſhman. But he knew very well how it was; it was all a miſerable piece of mummery that was played only in ſpite to him. But G— for ever blaſt his ſoul, if he were not bitterly revenged upon them all!

If ſuch were the ſentiments of Mr. Tyrrel, his patience found ample exerciſe in the language which was held by the reſt of his neighbours on the ſame ſubject. While he ſaw nothing in Mr. Falkland but matter for contempt, they appeared to be never weary of recounting his praiſes. Such dignity, ſuch affability, ſo perpetual an attention to the happineſs of others, ſuch delicacy of ſentiment and expreſſion! Learned without oſtentation, refined without foppery, elegant without effeminacy! Perpetually anxious to prevent his ſuperiority either in wealth or accompliſhments from being painfully felt, it was felt ſo much the more certainly, and excited congratulation inſtead of envy in the ſpectator. It is hardly neceſſary to remark that the

revolution in this caſe belongs to one of the moſt obvious features of the human mind. The rudeſt exhibition of art is at firſt admired; till a nobler is preſented, and we are taught to wonder at the facility with which before we had been ſatisfied. Mr. Tyrrel thought there would be no end to the commendation; and expected when their common acquaintance would fall down and adore him. The moſt inadvertent expreſſion of applauſe towards his rival inflicted upon him the torment of demons. He writhed with agony, his features became diſtorted, and his looks inſpired terror. Such ſuffering would probably have ſoured the kindeſt temper; what muſt have been its effect upon Mr. Tyrrel's, always fierce, unrelenting and abrupt?

The advantages of Mr. Falkland ſeemed by no means to diminiſh with their novelty. Every new ſufferer from Mr. Tyrrel's tyranny immediately went over to the ſtandard of his adverſary. The ladies, though treated by their ruſtic ſwain with more gentleneſs than the men, were occaſionally expoſed to his capriciouſneſs and inſolence. They could not help remarking the contraſt between theſe two leaders in the fields of Venus, the one of whom paid no attention to any one's pleaſure but his own, while the other ſeemed all good humour and benevolence. It was in vain that Mr. Tyrrel endeavoured to reſtrain the ruggedneſs of his character. His motive was impatience, his thoughts were gloomy, and his courtſhip was like the pawings of an elephant. It appeared as if his temper were more human while he had indulged it in its free bent, than now that he ſullenly endeavoured to put fetters upon its exceſſes.

Among the ladies of the village aſſembly already mentioned there was none that ſeemed to engage more of the kindneſs of Mr. Tyrrel than Miſs Hardingham. She was alſo one of the few that had

had not yet gone over to the enemy, either becauſe ſhe really preferred the gentleman who was her oldeſt acquaintance, or conceiving from calculation that this conduct would beſt inſure ſucceſs to her object in a huſband. One day however ſhe thought proper, probably only by way of temporary experiment, to ſhow Mr. Tyrrel that ſhe could engage in hoſtilities, if he ſhould at any time give her ſufficient provocation. She accordingly ſo adjuſted her manœuvres as to be engaged by Mr. Falkland as his partner for the dance of the evening, though without the ſmalleſt intention on the part of that gentleman of giving offence to his country neighbour.

A ſhort time before the dances began, Mr. Tyrrel went up to his fair inamorata, and entered into ſome trifling converſation with her to fill up the time, as intending in a few minutes to lead her forward to the field. He had accuſtomed himſelf to neglect the ceremony of ſoliciting beforehand a promiſe in his favour, as not ſuppoſing it poſſible that any one ſhould dare to diſpute his beheſts; and, had it been otherwiſe, he would have thought the formality unneceſſary in this caſe, his general preference to Miſs Hardingham being ſufficiently notorious.

While he was thus engaged, Mr. Falkland came up. Mr. Tyrrel always regarded him with averſion and loathing. Mr. Falkland however ſlided in a graceful and unaffected manner into the converſation that was already begun, and the well-meaning ingenuouſneſs of his manner was ſuch, as might for the time have diſarmed the devil of his malice. Mr. Tyrrel probably conceived that his accoſting Miſs Hardingham might be only an accidental piece of general ceremony, and expected every moment when he would withdraw to another part of the

room. Still he ſtaid, as if determined to tire out the patience of the ruſtic.

The company now began to be in motion for the dance, and Mr. Falkland informed Miſs Hardingham that it was time to advance.—Sir, interrupted Mr. Tyrrel abruptly, that lady is my partner.—I think not, ſir: I apprehend the lady has done me that favour, and I am very ſure ſhe has not promiſed herſelf to both.—I tell you, ſir, ſhe is mine: I pretend to think that I have ſome intereſt in that lady's affections; and I will ſuffer no man to intrude upon my claims.—The lady's affections are not the ſubject of the preſent queſtion.—And pray, what is the ſubject? Obſerve, ſir, I will not recede.—Mr. Tyrrel, there is no need of altercation in the preſent buſineſs: the maſter of the ceremonies is the proper perſon to decide; and, as neither of us can intend to diſturb the good humour of the aſſembly, or exhibit our valour before the ladies, we ſhall either of us chearfully ſubmit to his verdict.—Damn me, ſir, if I underſtand—Softly, Mr. Tyrrel. It really is not worth the while of either of us to quarrel about a queſtion that the forms of good company have long ago decided. I intended you no offence. But, ſir, I ſhall be abſolute in aſſerting that to which I have once acquired a claim. And you will pleaſe to obſerve that it is not my cuſtom to ſubmit to any unbecoming liberties.

Mr. Falkland uttered theſe words with the moſt even temper in the world. There was not in his manner the ſlighteſt appearance of defiance. The words, delivered with a certain tone, might have had the appearance of an affront. But they were uttered with the tone of a remonſtrance, calm, unaſſuming, and benevolent, without being contemptuous. Miſs Hardingham had begun to repent of her experiment, but her alarm was ſuddenly quieted by the irreſiſtible compoſure of her new

new partner. Mr. Tyrrel walked away without anſwering a word. He muttered curſes as he went, which the laws of honour did not oblige Mr. Falkland to overhear, and which indeed it would have been no eaſy taſk to have overheard with accuracy. Mr. Tyrrel would not perhaps have ſo eaſily given up his point, had not his own good ſenſe preſently taught him that, however eager he might be for revenge, this was not the ground he ſhould deſire to occupy. Add to this, that unaccuſtomed as he was to ſtrenuous oppoſition, he was leſs prepared inſtantaneouſly to encounter it; and indeed there was ſomething in Mr. Falkland's manner that extorted aſſent for the preſent, however prejudice might reaſſume its dominion. But, though Mr. Tyrrel could not openly reſent this rebellion againſt his authority, he brooded over it in the receſſes of a malignant mind; and it was evident enough that he was accumulating materials for a bitter account, to which he truſted that his adverſary ſhould one day be brought.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

THIS was only one out of innumerable inſtances that every day ſeemed to enlarge, of petty mortifications which Mr. Tyrrel was deſtined to endure on the part of Mr. Falkland. In every one of them Mr. Falkland conducted himſelf with ſuch propriety and unaffected mildneſs, as perpetually to make ſome addition to the ſtock of his reputation. The more Mr. Tyrrel ſtruggled with his misfortune, the more conſpicuous and inveterate it became. A thouſand times he curſed his ſtars, which took, as he apprehended, a malicious pleaſure in making Mr. Falkland at every turn the inſtrument of his humiliation. Smarting as he was under a ſucceſſion of untoward events, he appeared to feel in the moſt exquiſite manner the diſtinctions paid to his adverſary, even in thoſe particulars to which he had not the ſlighteſt pretenſions. An inſtance of this ſpeedily occurred.

Mr. Clare, a poet whoſe works have done immortal honour to the country that produced him, had lately retired, after a life ſpent in the ſublimeſt efforts of genius, to enjoy the produce of his economy and the reputation he had acquired, in this very neighbourhood. Such an inmate was looked up to by the country gentlemen with a degree of adoration. They felt a conſcious pride in recollecting that the boaſt of England was a native of their vicinity, and they were by no means deficient in gratitude to him, when they ſaw him who had left them an adventurer, return into the midſt of them in the cloſe of his days crowned with honours

nours and opulence. The reader is acquainted with his works; he has probably dwelt upon them with tranſport: and I need not remind him of their excellence. But he is perhaps a ſtranger to his perſonal qualifications. He does not know that his productions were ſcarcely more admirable than his converſation. In company he ſeemed to be the only perſon ignorant of the greatneſs of his fame. To the world his writings will long remain a kind of ſpecimen of what the human mind is capable of performing; but no man perceived their defects ſo acutely as he, or ſaw ſo diſtinctly how much yet remained to be effected. He alone appeared to look upon his works with ſuperiority and indifference. One of the features that moſt eminently diſtinguiſhed him was a perpetual ſuavity of manners, a comprehenſiveneſs of mind, that regarded the errors of others without a particle of reſentment, and made it impoſſible for any one to be his enemy. He pointed out to men their miſtakes with frankneſs and unreſerve: his remonſtrances produced aſtoniſhment and conviction, but without uneaſineſs to the party to whom they were addreſſed: they felt the inſtrument that was employed to correct their irregularities, but it never mangled what it was intended to heal. Such were the moral qualities that diſtinguiſhed him among his acquaintance. The intellectual accompliſhments he exhibited were principally a tranquil and mild enthuſiaſm, and a richneſs of conception that dictated ſpontaneouſly to his tongue, and flowed with ſo much eaſe, that it was only by retroſpect you could be made aware of the amazing variety of ideas that had been preſented.

Mr. Clare certainly found few men in this remote ſituation that were capable of participating in his ideas and amuſements. It has not ſeldom been the weakneſs of great men to fly to ſolitude, and

and converſe with woods and groves, rather than with a circle of ſtrong and comprehenſive minds like their own. From the moment of Mr. Falkland's arrival in the neighbourhood Mr. Clare diſtinguiſhed him in the moſt flattering manner. To ſo penetrating a genius there was no need of long experience and patient obſervation to diſcover the merits and defects of any character that preſented itſelf. The foundations of his judgment had long ſince been accumulated, and at the cloſe of ſo illuſtrious a life he might almoſt be ſaid to ſee through nature at a glance. What wonder that he took ſome intereſt in a mind in a certain degree congenial with his own? But to Mr. Tyrrel's diſeaſed imagination every diſtinction beſtowed on another ſeemed to be expreſsly intended as an inſult to him. On the other hand Mr. Clare, though gentle and benevolent in his remonſtrances to a degree that made the taking of offence impoſſible, was by no means parſimonious of praiſe, or ſlow to make uſe of the deference that was paid him, for the purpoſe of doing juſtice to merit. The pain which Mr. Tyrrel endured from this circumſtance in the preſent inſtance was extreme.

It happened at one of thoſe public meetings at which Mr. Falkland and Mr. Tyrrel were preſent, that the converſation, in one of the moſt numerous knots into which the company was broken, turned upon the poetical talents of the former. A lady, who was preſent, and was diſtinguiſhed for the acuteneſs of her underſtanding, ſaid, ſhe had been favoured with the ſight of a poem he had juſt written, entitled, an Ode to the Genius of Chivalry, which appeared to her of exquiſite merit. The curioſity of the company was immediately excited, and the lady added, ſhe had a copy in her pocket, which would be very much at their ſervice, provided its being thus produced would not be diſ-

agreeable

agreeable to the author. The whole circle immediately intreated Mr. Falkland to comply with their wiſhes, and Mr. Clare, who was one of the company, inforced their petition. Nothing gave this gentleman ſo much pleaſure as to have an opportunity of witneſſing and doing juſtice to the exhibition of intellectual excellence. Mr. Falkland had no falſe modeſty or affectation, and therefore readily yielded his conſent. If their kindneſs led them to expect too much, the loſs, he ſaid, was theirs. What he ought moſt to deſire was to be ſet right, and he hoped he had fortitude enough tranquilly to abide the verdict of juſtice.

Mr. Tyrrel accidentally ſat at the extremity of this circle. It cannot be ſuppoſed that the turn the converſation had taken was by any means agreeable to him. He ſeemed to wiſh to withdraw himſelf, but there was ſome unknown power that as it were by enchantment retained him in his place, and made him conſent to drink to the dregs the bitter potion which envy had prepared from him.

The poem was read to the reſt of the company by Mr. Clare, whoſe elocution was ſcarcely inferior to his other accompliſhments. Simplicity, diſcrimination and energy conſtantly attended him in the act of reading, and it is not eaſy to conceive a more refined delight than fell to the lot of thoſe who had the good fortune to be his auditors. The beauties of Mr. Falkland's poem were accordingly exhibited with every advantage. The ſucceſſive paſſions of the author were communicated to the reader. Every word was impreſſed with its true value, and none was brought forward with diſproportioned and elaborate emphaſis. The pictures conjured up by the creative fancy of the poet were placed full to view, at one time overwhelming the ſoul with ſuperſtitious awe, at another tranſporting it with luxuriant beauty.

The character of the hearers upon this occaſion has already been deſcribed. They were for the moſt part plain, unlettered, and of little refinement. Poetry in general they read, when read at all, from the mere force of imitation and with few ſenſations of pleaſure; but this poem had a peculiar vein of glowing inſpiration. This very poem would probably have been ſeen by many of them with little effect; but the rhetoric of Mr. Clare carried it home to the heart. He ended; and, as the countenances of his auditors had before gone along with the paſſions of the compoſition, ſo now they emulated each other in giving language to their approbation. They were ſurpriſed into a ſort of applauſe to which they were little accuſtomed. One ſpoke and another followed by a ſort of uncontroulable impulſe; and the rude and broken manner of their commendations rendered them the more ſingular and remarkable. But what was leaſt to be endured was the behaviour of Mr. Clare. He returned the manuſcript to the lady from whom he had received it, and then turning to Mr. Falkland ſaid with emphaſis and animation: Why, this is well, ſir. It is of the right ſtamp; none of your hard eſſays ſtrained from the ninefold labour of a pedant, or of your paſtoral ditties moſt diſmally diſtreſſed in ſearch of a meaning. We want ſuch people as you. But remember, young man, the muſe was not given to add new refinements to idleneſs, but for the deliverance of the world.

A moment after Mr. Clare had thus expreſſed himſelf, he quitted his ſeat, and with Mr. Falkland and two or three more withdrew. As ſoon as they were gone, Mr. Tyrrel edged farther into the circle. He had ſat ſilent ſo long that he ſeemed ready to burſt with gall and indignation. Mighty pretty verſes, ſaid he, half talking to himſelf, and not addreſſing any particular perſon: why,

why, aye, the verſes were well enough. Damnation! I ſhould like to know what a ſhip-load of ſuch ſtuff is good for.

Why, ſurely, ſaid the lady who had introduced Mr. Falkland's ode on the preſent occaſion, you muſt allow that poetry is a very agreeable and elegant amuſement.

Elegant, quotha!—Why, look at this Falkland! A puny bit of a thing! In the devil's name, madam, do you think he would write poetry if he could do any thing better?

The converſation did not ſtop here. The lady expoſtulated. Several other perſons, freſh from the ſenſation they had felt, put in their ſhare. Mr. Tyrrel grew more violent in his invectives, and found eaſe in uttering them. The perſons who were able in any degree to check his vehemence were withdrawn. One ſpeaker after another ſhrunk back into ſilence, too timid to oppoſe, or too indolent to contend with the fierceneſs of his paſſion. He found the appearance of his old aſcendancy; but he felt its deceitfulneſs and uncertainty, and was gloomily diſſatisfied.

In his return from this aſſembly he was accompanied by a young man whom ſimilitude of manners had rendered one of his principal confidents, and whoſe road home was in part the ſame as his own. One would have thought that Mr. Tyrrel had ſufficiently vented his ſpleen in the dialogue he had juſt been holding with the lady and her aſſociates. But he was unable to diſmiſs from his recollection the anguiſh he had endured. Damn Falkland! ſaid he. What a pitiful ſcoundrel is here to make all this buſtle about! But women and fools always will be fools; there is no help for that! Thoſe that ſet them on have moſt to anſwer for; and moſt of all Mr. Clare. He is a man that ought to know ſomething of the world, and paſt being

being duped by gewgaws and tinſel. He ſeemed too to have ſome ſenſe of juſtice: I ſhould not have ſuſpected him of hallooing to a cry of mongrels without honeſty or reaſon. But the world is all alike. Thoſe that ſeem better than their neighbours are only more artful. They mean the ſame thing, though they take a different road. He deceived me for a while, but it is all out now. They are the makers of all the miſchief. Fools might blunder, but they would not perſiſt, if people that ought to ſet them right, did not encourage them to go wrong.

A few days after this adventure Mr. Tyrrel was ſurpriſed to receive a viſit from Mr. Falkland. It was the firſt that had ever paſſed, they having never before ſeen each other but at a third place. Mr. Falkland proceeded without ceremony to explain the motive of his coming.

Mr. Tyrrel, ſaid he, I am come to have an amicable explanation with you.

Explanation! What is my offence?

None in the world, ſir; and for that reaſon I conceive this the fitteſt time for us to come to a right underſtanding.

You are in the devil of a hurry, ſir. Are you clear that this haſte will not mar, inſtead of make an underſtanding?

I think I am, ſir. I have great faith in the purity of my intentions, and I will not doubt that, when you perceive the view with which I come, you will willingly co-operate with it.

Mayhap, Mr. Falkland, we may not agree about that. One man thinks one way, and another man thinks another. Mayhap I do not think I have any great reaſon to be pleaſed with you already.

It may be ſo. I cannot however charge myſelf with having giving you reaſon to be diſpleaſed.

Mr.

Mr. Tyrrel, proceeded Mr. Falkland, you will readily imagine that the cauſe that brought me hither was not a ſlight one. I would not have troubled you with a viſit but for important reaſons. My coming is a pledge how deeply I am myſelf impreſſed with what I have to communicate.

We are in a critical ſituation. We are upon the brink of a whirlpool which, if once it get hold of us, will render all farther deliberation impotent. Shall we be enemies? What benefit will be derived from that? Who ever found in gall, malice, ſuſpicion and hatred the materials of happineſs? No; to the breaſt where they enter, happineſs is for ever a ſtranger. They haunt our relaxations, they poiſon our pleaſures, they hardly allow us a moment of unmixed ſatisfaction. A brow of care, a cankered heart, a boſom burſting with rage, theſe are their retinue.—If we be enemies, who ſhall tell where our enmity ſhall ſtop? Every new event will feed it; it will ſwell beyond imagination or limit; ever ſeeming enlarged to its utmoſt ſize, it will ſtill become more monſtrous, more intolerable!

Upon my ſoul, you are an extraordinary man,—an impertinent man! Why intrude upon me your prophecies and forebodings?

Becauſe it is neceſſary to your happineſs. Becauſe it becomes me to tell you of our danger now, rather than wait till my character will permit me to be ſilent no longer.

Sir, I mean to take care of my own happineſs. I do not thank you for your interference. Damn me, if I think this is any thing elſe but a trick to put a new feather in your cap at your neighbour's expence.

Mr. Tyrrel, it is to provide againſt ſuch miſconſtructions on either part that I have ſought you. I know the infirmity of my temper, but at leaſt upon this occaſion I am determined not to take any thing

thing ill. If my intention had been to outſhine you, ſhould I have come alone?

Well, ſir, you have no right to put me out of humour with myſelf. If you come to play upon me, and try what ſort of a fellow you ſhall have to deal with, damn me, if you ſhall have any reaſon to hug yourſelf upon the experiment.

Mr. Tyrrel, nothing is more eaſy for us than to quarrel. If you deſire that, there is no fear that you will find opportunities.

Damn me, ſir, if I do not believe you are come to bully me.

Good God, Mr. Tyrrel, be leſs unjuſt! My character is too well known to allow it to be ſuppoſed that I fear any man, and I do not in the leaſt ſuſpect you of a weakneſs in that reſpect to which I am myſelf a ſtranger.

Well, ſir, that is thereafter as it may be.

By quarrelling we ſhall but imitate the great maſs of mankind who could eaſily quarrel in our place. Let us do better. Let us ſhow that we have the wiſdom to avoid vulgar errors, and the magnanimity to condemn petty miſunderſtandings. We are formed in different habits; why ſhould we interfere? The world is wide enough for both. By thus judging we ſhall do ourſelves moſt ſubſtantial honour. By a contrary conduct we ſhall be ourſelves the ſufferers, and merely preſent a comedy for the amuſement of our acquaintance.

Do you think ſo? There may be ſomething in that. Damn me, if I conſent to be the jeſt of any man living.

You are right, Mr. Tyrrel. Let us each act in the manner beſt calculated to excite reſpect. We neither of us wiſh to change roads with the other; let us each ſuffer the other to purſue his own track unmoleſted. Be this our compact; and by mutual forbearance let us preſerve mutual peace.

Saying

Saying this, Mr. Falkland put out his hand in token of fellowſhip. But the geſture was too ſignificant. The wayward Tyrrel, who ſeemed to have been ſomewhat impreſſed by what had preceded, taken as he was now by ſurpriſe, ſhrunk back.

All this is very unaccountable, cried he. What the devil can have made you ſo forward, if you had not ſome ſly purpoſe to anſwer by which I am to be overreached?

My purpoſe, replied Mr. Falkland, is a manly and an honeſt purpoſe. Why ſhould you refuſe a propoſition dictated by reaſon, and an equal regard to the intereſt of each?—Mr. Tyrrel had had an opportunity for pauſe, and fell back into his habitual character.

Well, ſir, in all this I muſt own there is ſome frankneſs. Now I will return you like for like. It is no matter how I came by it, my temper is rough, and will not be controuled. Mayhap you may think it a weakneſs, but I do not deſire to ſee it altered. Till you came, I found myſelf very well: I liked my neighbours, and my neighbours humoured me. But now the caſe is entirely altered; and, as long as I cannot ſtir abroad without meeting with ſome mortification in which you are directly or remotely concerned, I am determined to hate you. Now, ſir, if you will only go out of the county or the kingdom, to the devil if you pleaſe, ſo as I may never hear of you any more, I will promiſe never to quarrel with you as long as I live. Your poetry and your delicacy, your quirks and your conundrums may then be the very paragon of excellence for what I care.

Mr. Tyrrel, attend to reaſon. I might as well deſire you to leave the county, as you deſire me. I came here to you, not as to a maſter, but an equal. In the ſociety of men we muſt have ſome-

thing

thing to bear, as well as to perform. No man muſt think that the world was made for him alone. Let us then take things as we find them; and accommodate ourſelves with prudence to unavoidable circumſtances.

True, ſir, all that is very fine talking. But I return to my text; we are as God made us. I am neither a philoſopher nor a poet, to ſet out upon a wild-gooſe chaſe of making myſelf a different man from what you find me. As for conſequences, what muſt be muſt be. As we brew, we muſt bake. And ſo, do you ſee, I ſhall not trouble myſelf about what is to be, but ſtand up to it with a ſtout heart when it comes. Only this I can tell you, that, as long as I find you thruſt into my diſh every day, I ſhall hate you as bad as ſenna and valerian. And damn me, if I do not think I hate you the more for coming to-day in this pragmatical way when nobody ſent for you, on purpoſe to ſhow how much wiſer you are than all the world beſides.

Mr. Tyrrel, I have done. I foreſaw conſequences, and came as a friend to adviſe you. I did hope that by mutual explanation we ſhould each of us have improved in the good opinion of the other. I am partly diſappointed; but I ſtill believe that when you coolly reflect on what has paſſed, you will give me credit for the honeſty of my intentions, and be diſpoſed to think of me with the ſame conſideration and liberality as I am determined to exerciſe towards you.

Having ſaid this, Mr. Falkland departed; and Mr. Tyrrel had recourſe to his old friend, to whom he unburthened the tumult of his thoughts. This, cried he, is a new artifice of the fellow to prove his imagined ſuperiority. We know very well that he has the gift of the gab. To be ſure, if the world were to be governed by words, he would be

be in the right box. Oh, yes, he had it all hollow before him! But what ſignifies prating? Buſineſs muſt be done in an other-gueſs way than that. I wonder what poſſeſſed me that I did not kick him! But that is all to come. This is only a new debt added to the ſcore which he ſhall one day richly pay. This Falkland haunts me like a demon. I cannot wake, but I think of him. I cannot ſleep, but I ſee him. He poiſons all my pleaſures. I ſhould be glad to ſee him torn with tenter-hooks, and to grind his heart-ſtrings with my teeth. I ſhall know no joy, till I ſee him ruined. There may be ſome things right about him; but he is my perpetual torment. The thought of him preſſes like a dead weight upon my heart, and I have a right to throw it off. Does he think I will feel all that I endure for nothing?

In ſpite of the acerbity of Mr. Tyrrel's feelings, it is probable however he did ſome juſtice to his rival. Upon ordinary occaſions at leaſt he ſeemed diſpoſed to treat him with an involuntary deference. He was no longer equally voluble in mixed companies in his abuſe of him; a part of the topics of his invective ſeemed to be gone. He was no longer eager to treat him with random hoſtility; if he regarded him with equal diſlike, he at leaſt appeared to regard him as a formidable foe. He avoided his encounter; he forbore to contradict his opinions; he ſeemed to lie in wait for his victim, and to collect his venom for a mortal aſſault.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

IT was not long after that a malignant contagious diſtemper broke out in the neighbourhood, which proved fatal to many of the inhabitants, and was of unexampled rapidity in its effects. One of the firſt perſons that was ſeized with it was Mr. Clare. It may be believed that this incident ſpread grief and alarm through the vicinity. Mr. Clare was conſidered by them as ſomething more than a mortal. The equanimity of his behaviour, his unaſſuming carriage, his exuberant benevolence and goodneſs of heart, joined with his talents, his inoffenſive wit, and the comprehenſiveneſs of his intelligence made him the idol of all that knew him. In the ſcene of his rural retreat at leaſt he had not an enemy. All mourned the danger that now threatened him. He appeared to have the proſpect of long life, and of going down to his grave full of years and of honour. Perhaps theſe appearances were deceitful. Perhaps the intellectual efforts he had exerted, which were occaſionally more ſudden, violent and unintermitted than a ſtrict regard to health would have dictated, had laid the ſeeds of future diſeaſe. But a ſanguine obſerver would infallibly have predicted, that his good ſenſe, preſence of mind and unaltered chearfulneſs would be able even to keep death at bay for a time and baffle the attacks of diſtemper, provided this univerſal foe did not take him by ſurpriſe. The general affliction therefore was doubly pungent upon the preſent occaſion.

But

But no one was ſo much affected as Mr. Falkland. Perhaps no man living ſo well underſtood the value of the life that was now at ſtake. He immediately haſtened to the ſpot; but he found ſome difficulty in gaining admiſſion. Mr. Clare, aware of the infectious nature of his diſeaſe, had given directions that as few people as poſſible ſhould approach him. Mr. Falkland ſent up his name. He was told that he was included in the general orders. He was not however of a temper to be eaſily repulſed; he perſiſted with obſtinacy, and at length carried his point, being only reminded in the firſt inſtance to employ thoſe precautions which experience has approved as moſt effectual for counteracting infection.

He found Mr. Clare in his bedchamber, but not in bed. He was ſitting in his night-gown at a bureau near the window. His appearance was compoſed and chearful, but death was in his countenance. I had a great inclination, Mr. Falkland, ſaid he, not to have ſuffered you to come in; and yet there is not a perſon in the world it could give me more pleaſure to ſee. But upon ſecond thoughts I believe there are few people that could run into a danger of this kind with a better proſpect of eſcaping. In your caſe, at leaſt the garriſon will not be taken through the treachery of the commander. I cannot tell how it is that I, who can preach wiſdom to you, have myſelf been caught. But do not be diſcouraged by my example. I had no notice of my danger, or I would have acquitted myſelf better. Theſe ſtrange ſeeds of diſtemper ſeem to float in the air, and to faſten upon the frame without its being poſſible for us to tell what was the method of their approach.

Mr. Falkland, having once eſtabliſhed himſelf in the apartment of his friend, would upon no terms conſent to retire. Mr. Clare conſidered that there

was

was perhaps leſs danger in this choice than in a frequent change from the extremes of a pure to a tainted air, and deſiſted from his expoſtulation. Falkland, ſaid he, when you came in, I had juſt finiſhed making my will. I was not pleaſed with what I had formerly drawn up upon that ſubject, and I did not chooſe in my preſent ſituation to call in an attorney. In fact it would be ſtrange if a man of ſenſe with pure and direct intentions ſhould not be able to perform ſuch a function for himſelf.

Mr. Clare continued to act in the ſame eaſy and diſengaged manner as in perfect health. To judge from the chearfulneſs of his tone and the firmneſs of his manner, the thought would never once have occurred to you that he was dying. He walked, he reaſoned, he jeſted, in a way that argued the moſt perfect ſelf-poſſeſſion. But his appearance changed perceptibly for the worſe every quarter of an hour. Mr. Falkland kept his eye perpetually fixed upon him with mingled ſentiments of anxiety and admiration.

Falkland, ſaid he, after having appeared for a ſhort period abſorbed in thought, I feel that I am dying. This is a ſtrange diſtemper of mine. Yeſterday I ſeemed in perfect health, and to-morrow I ſhall be an inſenſible corpſe. How curious is the line that ſeparates life and death to mortal men! To be at one moment active, gay, penetrating, with immenſe ſtores of knowledge at one's command, capable of delighting, inſtructing and animating mankind, and the next, lifeleſs and loathſome, an incumbrance upon the face of the earth. Such is the hiſtory of many men, and ſuch will be mine.

I feel as if I had yet much to do in the world; but it will not be. I muſt be contented with what is paſt. It is in vain that I muſter all my ſpirits to my

my heart. The enemy is too mighty and too merciles for me; he will not give me time ſo much as to breathe. Theſe things are not yet in our power. They are parts of a great ſeries that is perpetually flowing. The general welfare, the great buſineſs of the univerſe, will go on, though I bear no farther ſhare in promoting it. That taſk is reſerved for younger ſtrengths, for you, Falkland, and ſuch as you. We ſhould be contemptible indeed, if the proſpect of human improvement did not yield us a pure and perfect delight, independently of the queſtion of our exiſting to partake of it. Mankind would have little to envy to future ages, if they had all enjoyed a ſerenity as perfect as mine.

Mr. Clare ſat up through the whole day, indulging himſelf in eaſy and chearful exertions, which were perhaps better calculated to refreſh and invigorate the frame, than if he had ſought repoſe in its direct form Now and then he was viſited with a ſudden pang; but it was no ſooner felt, than he ſeemed to riſe above it, and ſmiled at the impotence of the attack. Three or four times he was bedewed with profuſe ſweats, and theſe again were ſucceeded by an extreme dryneſs and burning heat of the ſkin. He was next covered with ſmall livid ſpots. Symptoms of ſhivering followed, but theſe he drove away with a determined reſolution. He then became tranquil and compoſed, and after ſome time determined to go to bed, it being already night. Falkland, ſaid he, preſſing his hand, the taſk of dying is not ſo difficult, as ſome people imagine. When one looks back from the brink of it, one wonders that ſo total a ſubverſion can take place at ſo eaſy a rate.

He had now been ſome time in bed, and, as every thing was ſtill, Mr. Falkland hoped that he ſlept. But in that he was miſtaken. Preſently Mr. Clare threw back the curtain, and looked in the

the countenance of his friend. I cannot ſleep, ſaid he. No, if I could ſleep, it would be the ſame thing as to recover; and I am fated to have the worſt in this battle.

Falkland, I have been thinking about you. I do not know any one whoſe future uſefulneſs I contemplate with greater hope. Take care of yourſelf. Do not let the world be defrauded of the benefit of your virtues. I am well acquainted with your weakneſs as well as your ſtrength. You have an impetuoſity and an impatience of imagined diſhonour, that, if once ſet wrong, may make you as eminently miſchievous, as you will otherwiſe be uſeful. Would to God you would think ſeriouſly of exterminating this error!

But, if I cannot, in the brief expoſtulation my preſent ſituation will allow, work this deſirable change in you, there is at leaſt one thing I can do. I can put you upon your guard againſt a miſchief I foreſee to be imminent. Beware of Mr. Tyrrel. Do not commit the miſtake of deſpiſing him as an unequal opponent. Petty cauſes may produce great miſchiefs. Mr. Tyrrel is boiſterous, rugged and unfeeling; and you are too paſſionate, too acutely ſenſible of injury. It would be truly to be lamented, if a man ſo inferior, ſo utterly unworthy to be compared with you, ſhould be capable of changing your whole hiſtory into miſery and guilt. Think of this. I exact no promiſe from you. I would not ſhackle you with the fetters of ſuperſtition; I would have you be governed by reaſon and juſtice.

Mr. Falkland was deeply affected with this expoſtulation. His ſenſe of the generous attention of Mr. Clare at ſuch a moment as this, was ſo great as almoſt to deprive him of utterance. He ſpoke in ſhort ſentences and with viſible effort. I will behave better, replied he. Never fear me! Your kind

kind admonitions ſhall not be thrown away upon me.

Mr. Clare adverted to another ſubject. I have made you my executor; you will not refuſe me this laſt office of friendſhip. It is but a ſhort time that I have had the happineſs of knowing you; but in that ſhort time I have examined you well, and ſeen you thoroughly. Do not diſappoint the ſanguine hope I have entertained!

I have left ſome legacies. My former connections, while I lived amidſt the buſy haunts of men, as many of them as were intimate, are all of them dear to me. I have not had time to ſummon them about me upon the preſent occaſion, nor did I deſire it. The remembrances of me will, I hope, anſwer a better purpoſe than ſuch as are uſually thought of on ſimilar occaſions.

Mr. Clare, having thus unburthened his mind, ſpoke no more for ſeveral hours. Towards morning Mr. Falkland quietly withdrew the curtain, and looked at the dying man. His eyes were open, and were now gently turned towards his young friend. His countenance was ſunk, and of a death-like appearance. I hope you are better, ſaid Falkland in a half-whiſper, as if afraid of diſturbing him. Mr. Clare drew his hand from the bed-clothes, and ſtretched it forward; Mr. Falkland advanced, and took hold of it. Much better, ſaid Mr. Clare in a voice, inward and hardly articulate: the ſtruggle is now over; I have finiſhed my part; farewel; remember! Theſe were his laſt words. He lived ſtill a few hours; his lips were ſometimes ſeen to move; he expired without a groan.

Mr. Falkland had witneſſed the ſcene with much anxiety. His hopes of a favourable criſis, and his fear of diſturbing the laſt moments of his friend, had held him dumb. For the laſt half hour he had ſtood up with his eyes intently fixed upon Mr. Clare.

Clare. He witneſſed the laſt gaſp, the laſt little convulſive motion of the frame. He continued to look; he ſeemed ſometimes to imagine that he ſaw life renewed At length he could deceive himſelf no longer, and exclaimed with a diſtracted accent, And is this all? He would have thrown himſelf upon the body of his friend; the attendants withheld, and would have forced him into another apartment. But he ſtruggled from them, and hung fondly over the bed. Is this the end of genius, virtue and excellence? Is the luminary of the world thus for ever gone? Oh, yeſterday! yeſterday! Clare, why could not I have died in your ſtead? Dreadful moment! Irreparable loſs! Loſt in the very maturity and vigour of his mind! Cut off from a uſefulneſs ten thouſand times greater than any he had already exhibited! Oh, his was a mind to have inſtructed ſages, and guided the moral world! This is all we have left of him! The eloquence of thoſe lips is gone! The inceſſant activity of that heart is ſtill! The beſt and wiſeſt of men is gone, and the world is inſenſible of its loſs!

Mr. Tyrrel heard the intelligence of Mr. Clare's death with emotion, but of a very different kind. He avowed that he had not forgiven him his partial attachment to Falkland, and therefore could not recal his remembrance with kindneſs. But, if he could have overlooked his paſt injuſtice, ſufficient care was taken to employ means to keep alive his reſentment. Falkland forſooth attended him on his death-bed, as if nobody elſe was worthy to partake of his confidential communications. But what was worſt of all was this executorſhip. In every thing this pragmatical raſcal throws me behind. Contemptible wretch, that has nothing of the man about him! Muſt he perpetually trample on his betters? Is every body incapable of reaſon, and making

making a right eſtimate of the merits of men? caught with mere outſide? chooſing the flimſy before the ſubſtantial? And upon his death-bed too! [Mr. Tyrrel with his uncultivated brutality mixed, as uſually happens, certain rude notions of religion.] Sure the ſenſe of his ſituation might have ſhamed him. Poor wretch! his ſoul has a great deal to anſwer for. He has made my pillow uneaſy; and whatever may be the conſequences, it is him we have to thank for them.

The death of Mr. Clare removed the perſon who could moſt effectually have moderated the animoſities of the contending parties, and took away the great operative check upon the exceſſes of Mr. Tyrrel. This ruſtic tyrant had been held in involuntary reſtraint by the intellectual aſcendancy of his celebrated neighbour; and, notwithſtanding the general ferocity of his temper, did not appear till lately to have entertained a hatred againſt him. In the ſhort time that had elapſed from the period in which Mr. Clare had fixed his reſidence in the neighbourhood to that of the arrival of Mr. Falkland from the Continent, the conduct of Mr. Tyrrel had even ſhown certain tokens of improvement. Such was the felicity of Mr. Clare's manners that, even while he corrected, he conciliated, and excited no angry emotions in thoſe whoſe actions were moſt curbed by the apprehenſion of his diſpleaſure. The effects of his ſuavity however, ſo far as related to Mr. Tyrrel, had been in a certain degree ſuſpended by conſiderations of rivalſhip between this gentleman and Mr. Falkland. And, now that the influence of Mr. Clare's preſence and virtues were entirely removed, Mr. Tyrrel's temper broke out into more criminal exceſſes than at any former period, having the additional ſtimulus of mortified pride and diſappointed ambition.

CHAP. VI.

THE conſequences of all this ſpeedily manifeſted themſelves. The very next incident in the ſtory was in ſome degree deciſive of the cataſtrophe. Hitherto I have ſpoken only of preliminary matters, ſeemingly unconnected with each other, though leading to that ſtate of mind in both parties, which had ſuch fatal effects. But all that remains is rapid and tremendous. The death-dealing miſchief advances with an accelerated motion, appearing to defy human wiſdom and human ſtrength to obſtruct its operation.

There was a tenant of Mr. Tyrrel, one Hawkins;—I cannot mention his name without recollecting the painful tragedies that are annexed to it! This Hawkins had originally been taken up by Mr. Tyrrel with a view of protecting him from the arbitrary proceedings of a neighbouring ſquire, though he had now in his turn become an object of perſecution to Mr. Tyrrel himſelf. The firſt ground of their connection was this. Hawkins, beſide a farm which he rented under the abovementioned ſquire, had a ſmall freehold eſtate that he inherited from his father. This of courſe entitled him to a vote in the county elections; and, a warmly conteſted election having occurred, he was required by his landlord to vote for the candidate in whoſe favour he had himſelf engaged. Hawkins refuſed to obey the mandate, and ſoon after received notice to quit the farm he at that time rented.

It happened that Mr. Tyrrel had intereſted himſelf ſtrongly in behalf of the oppoſite candidate; and,

and, as Mr. Tyrrel's eſtate bordered upon the ſeat of Hawkins's reſidence, the ejected countryman could think of no better expedient than that of riding over to this gentleman's manſion, and relating the caſe to him. Mr. Tyrrel heard him through with attention. Well, friend, ſaid he, it is very true that I wiſhed Mr. Jackman to carry his election; but you know it is uſual in theſe caſes for tenants to vote juſt as their landlords pleaſe. I do not think proper to encourage rebellion.—All that is very right, and pleaſe you, replied Hawkins; and I would have voted at my landlord's bidding for any other man in the three kingdoms but ſquire Marlow. You muſt know one day his huntſman rode over my fence, and ſo through my beſt field of ſtanding corn. It was not above a dozen yards about, if he had kept the cart-road. The fellow had ſerved me the ſame ſauce, an it pleaſe your honour, three or four times before. So I only aſked him, What he did that for, and whether he had not more conſcience than to ſpoil people's crops a' that faſhion? Preſently the ſquire came up. He is but a poor, weazen-face chicken of a gentleman, ſaving your honour's reverence. And ſo he flew into a woundy paſſion, and threatened to horſewhip me. I will do as much in reaſon to pleaſure my landlord as arr a tenant he has; but I will not give my vote to a man that threatens to horſewhip me. And ſo, your honour, I and my wife and three children are to be turned out of houſe and home, and what I am to do to maintain them God knows. I have been a hard-working man, and have always lived very well, and I do think the caſe is main hard. Squire Underwood turns me out of my farm; and, if your honour do not take me in, I know none of the neighbouring gentry will, for fear as they ſay of encouraging their own tenants to run ruſty too.

This repreſentation was not without its effect upon Mr. Tyrrel. Well, well, man, replied he, we will ſee what can be done. Order and ſubordination are very good things; but people ſhould know how much to require. As you tell the ſtory, I cannot ſee that you are greatly to blame. Marlow is a coxcombical prig, that is the truth on't; and, if a man will expoſe himſelf, why, he muſt even take what follows. I do hate a Frenchified fop with all my ſoul; and I cannot ſay that I am much pleaſed with Mr. Underwood for taking the part of ſuch a raſcal. Hawkins, I think is your name? You may call on Barnes, my ſteward, to-morrow, and he ſhall ſpeak to you.

While Mr. Tyrrel was ſpeaking, he recollected that he had a farm vacant of nearly the ſame value as that which Hawkins at preſent rented under Mr. Underwood. He immediately conſulted his ſteward, and, finding the thing ſuitable in every reſpect, Hawkins was admitted out of hand into the catalogue of Mr. Tyrrel's tenants. Mr. Underwood extremely reſented this proceeding, which indeed, as being contrary to the underſtood conventions of the country gentlemen, few people but Mr. Tyrrel would have ventured upon. He ſaid that there was an end to all regulation, if tenants were to be encouraged in ſuch inexcuſable diſobedience. It was not a queſtion of this or that candidate, ſeeing that any gentleman, who was a true friend to his country, would rather loſe his election, than do a thing which if once eſtabliſhed into a practice, would deprive them for ever of the power of managing any election. The labouring people were ſturdy and reſolute enough of their own accord; it became every day more difficult to keep them under any ſubordination; and, if the gentlemen were ſo ill-adviſed as to neglect the pub-

lic

lic good, and encourage them in their inſolence, there was no foreſeeing where it would end.

Mr. Tyrrel was not of a ſtamp to be influenced by theſe remonſtrances. Their general ſpirit was ſufficiently conformable to the ſentiments he himſelf entertained; but he was of too vehement a temper to maintain the character of a conſiſtent politician; and, however wrong his conduct might be, he would by no means admit of its being ſet right by the ſuggeſtions of others. The more his patronage of Hawkins was criticiſed, the more inflexibly he adhered to it; and he was at no loſs in clubs and other aſſemblies to overbear and ſilence, if not to confute his cenſurers. Beſide which, Hawkins had certain accompliſhments which qualified him to be a favourite with Mr. Tyrrel. The bluntneſs of his manner and the ruggedneſs of his temper gave him ſome reſemblance to his landlord; and, as theſe qualities were likely to be more frequently exerciſed on ſuch perſons as had incurred Mr. Tyrrel's diſpleaſure than upon Mr. Tyrrel himſelf, they were not obſerved without ſome degree of complacency. In a word, he every day received new marks of diſtinction from his patron, and after ſome time was appointed coadjutor to Mr. Barnes in the capacity of bailiff. It was about the ſame period that he obtained a leaſe of the farm of which he was tenant.

Mr. Tyrrel was determined, as occaſion offered, to promote every part of the family of this favoured dependent. Hawkins had a ſon, a lad of ſeventeen, of a very agreeable perſon, a ruddy complexion, and of quick and lively parts. This lad was in an uncommon degree the favourite of his father, who ſeemed to have nothing ſo much at heart as the future welfare of his ſon. Mr. Tyrrel had noticed him two or three times with approbation; and the boy, being fond of the ſports of the field,

field, had occaſionally followed the hounds, and diſplayed various inſtances both of agility and ſagacity in preſence of the ſquire. One day in particular he exhibited himſelf with uncommon advantage; and Mr. Tyrrel without farther delay propoſed to his father to take him into his family, and make him whipper-in to his hounds, till he could provide him with ſome more lucrative appointment in his ſervice.

This propoſal was received by Hawkins with various marks of mortification. He excuſed himſelf with heſitation for not accepting the offered favour; ſaid the lad was in many ways uſeful to him; and hoped his honour would not inſiſt upon depriving him of his aſſiſtance. This apology might perhaps have been ſufficient with any other man than Mr. Tyrrel; but it was frequently obſerved of this gentleman that, when he had once formed a determination however ſlight in favour of any meaſure, he was never afterwards known to give it up, and that the only effect of oppoſition was to make him eager and inflexible in purſuit of that to which he had before been nearly indifferent. At firſt he ſeemed to receive the apology of Hawkins with good humour, and to ſee nothing in it but what was reaſonable; but afterwards every time he ſaw the boy his deſire of retaining him in his ſervice was increaſed, and he more than once repeated to his father the good diſpoſition in which he felt himſelf towards him. At length he obſerved that the lad was no more to be ſeen mingling in his favourite ſports, and he began to ſuſpect that this originated in a determination to thwart him in his projects.

Rouſed by this ſuſpicion, which was not of a nature with Mr. Tyrrel to brook a delay, he ſent for Hawkins to confer with him. Hawkins, ſaid he, in a tone of diſpleaſure, I am not ſatisfied with you.

you. I have ſpoken to you two or three times about this lad of yours, whom I am deſirous of taking into favour. What is the reaſon, ſir, that you ſeem unthankful and averſe to my kindneſs? You ought to know that I am not to be trifled with. I ſhall not be contented, when I offer my favours to have them rejected by ſuch fellows as you. I made you what you are; and, if I pleaſe, can make you more helpleſs and miſerable than you were when I found you. Have a care!

An it pleaſe your honour, ſaid Hawkins, you have been a very good maſter to me, and I will tell you the whole truth. I hope you will na be angry. This lad is my favourite, my comfort and the ſtay of my age.

Well, and what then? Is that a reaſon you ſhould hinder his preferment?

Nay, pray your honour, hear me. I may be very weak for aught I know in this caſe, but I cannot help it. My father was a clergyman. We have all of us lived in a creditable way; and I cannot bear to think that this poor lad of mine ſhould go to ſervice. For my part, I do not ſee any good that comes of ſervants. God forgive me, if I am unjuſt! But this is a very dear caſe, and I cannot bear to riſk my poor boy's welfare, when I can ſo eaſily, if you pleaſe, keep him out of harm's way. At preſent he is ſober and induſtrious, and, without being conceited or ſurly, knows what is due to him. I know, your honour, that it is main fooliſh of me to talk to you thus; but your honour has been a good maſter to me, and I cannot bear to tell you a lie.

Mr. Tyrrel had heard the whole of this harangue in ſilence, becauſe he was too much aſtoniſhed to open his mouth. If a thunderbolt had fallen unexpectedly at his feet, he could not have teſtified greater ſurpriſe. He had thought that Hawkins

was

was ſo fooliſhly fond of his ſon that he could not bear to truſt him out of his preſence, but had never in the ſlighteſt degree ſuſpected what he now found to be the truth.

Oh, oh, you are a gentleman, are you? A pretty gentleman truly! Your father was a clergyman! Your family is too good to enter into my ſervice! Why, you impudent raſcal! was it for this that I took you up, when Mr. Underwood diſmiſſed you for your inſolence to him? Have I been nurſing a viper in my boſom? Pretty maſter's manners will be contaminated truly! He will not know what is due to him, but will be accuſtomed to obey orders! You inſufferable villain! Get out of my ſight! Depend upon it, I will have no gentlemen on my eſtate! I will off with them, root and branch, bag and baggage! So, do you hear, ſir? come to me to-morrow morning, bring your ſon, and aſk my pardon; or take my word for it, I will make you ſo miſerable, you ſhall wiſh you had never been born

This treatment was too much for Hawkins's patience. There is no need, your honour, that I ſhould come to you again about this affair. I have taken up my determination, and no accident or time can make any change in it. I am main ſorry to diſpleaſe your worſhip, and I know very well that you can do me a great deal of miſchief. But I hope you will not be ſo hard hearted, as to ruin a father only for being fond of his child, even if ſo be that his fondneſs ſhould make him do a fooliſh thing. But I cannot help it, your honour: you muſt do as you pleaſe. The pooreſt ſlave in the world has ſome point that he does not part with. I will loſe all that I have, and go to day-labour, and my ſon too, if needs muſt; but I will not make a gentleman's ſervant of him.

Very

Very well, friend; very well! replied Tyrrel, foaming with rage. Depend upon it, I will remember you! Your pride ſhall have a downfal! G— damn it! is it come to this? Shall a louſy raſcal, that farms his forty acres, pretend to beard the lord of the manor? I will tread you into paſte! Let me adviſe you, ſcoundrel, to ſhut up your houſe, and quit my eſtate, and fly as if the devil was behind you! You may think yourſelf happy, if I be not too quick for you yet, if you eſcape in a whole ſkin! I would not ſuffer ſuch a villain to remain upon my land a day longer, if I could gain the Indies by it!

Not ſo faſt, your honour, anſwered Hawkins ſturdily. I hope you will think better of it, and ſee that I have not been to blame. But, if you ſhould not, there is ſome harm that you can do me, and ſome harm that you cannot. Though I am a plain working man, your honour, do you ſee? yet I am a man ſtill. No; I have got a leaſe of my farm, and I ſhall not quit it o'thaten. I hope there is ſome law for poor folk, as well as for rich ones.

Mr. Tyrrel, unuſed to contradiction, was provoked beyond bearing at the courage and independent ſpirit of his retainer. There was not a tenant upon his eſtate, or at leaſt not one of Hawkins's mediocrity of fortune, whom the general policy of land-owners, and ſtill more the arbitrary and uncontroulable temper of Mr. Tyrrel, did not effectually reſtrain from acts of open defiance.

Excellent, upon my ſoul! G— damn my blood! but you are a rare fellow. You have a leaſe, have you? You will not quit, not you! A pretty paſs things are come to, if a leaſe can protect ſuch fellows as you againſt the lord of a manor! But you are for a trial of ſkill, are you? Oh, very well, friend, very well! With all my ſoul! Since it is

come to that, we will ſhow you ſome pretty ſport before we have done! But get you out of my ſight, you raſcal! I have not another word to ſay to you! Never darken my doors again!

Hawkins, to borrow the language of the world, was guilty in this affair of a double imprudence. He talked to his landlord in a more peremptory manner than the conſtitution and practices of this country allow a dependent to aſſume. But above all, having been thus hurried away by his reſentment, he ought to have foreſeen the conſequences. It was mere madneſs in him to think of conteſting with a man of Mr. Tyrrel's eminence and fortune. It was a fawn contending with a lion. Nothing could have been more eaſy to predict, than that it was of no avail for him to have right on his ſide, when his adverſary had influence and wealth, and therefore could ſo victoriouſly juſtify any extravagancies that he might think proper to commit. This maxim was completely illuſtrated in the ſequel. Wealth and deſpotiſm eaſily know how to engage thoſe laws, which were perhaps at firſt intended [witleſs and miſerable precaution!] for the ſafeguards of the poor, as the coadjutors of their oppreſſion.

From this moment Mr. Tyrrel was bent upon Hawkins's deſtruction; and he left no means unemployed that could either haraſs or injure the object of his perſecution. He deprived him of his appointment of bailiff, and directed Barnes and his other dependents to do him ill offices upon all occaſions. Mr. Tyrrel by the tenure of his manor was impropriator of the great tithes, and this circumſtance afforded him frequent opportunities of petty altercation. The land of one part of Hawkins's farm, though covered with corn, was lower than the reſt; and conſequently expoſed to occaſional inundations from a river by which it was bounded.

bounded. Mr. Tyrrel had a dam belonging to this river privately cut about a fortnight before the ſeaſon of harveſt, and laid the whole under water. He ordered his ſervants to pull away the fences of the higher ground during the night, and to turn in his cattle to the utter deſtruction of the crop. Theſe expedients however applied to only one part of the property of this unfortunate man. But Mr. Tyrrel did not ſtop here. A ſudden mortality took place among Hawkins's live ſtock, attended with very ſuſpicious circumſtances. Hawkins's vigilance was ſtrongly excited by this event, and he at length ſucceeded in tracing the matter ſo accurately that he conceived he could bring it home to Mr. Tyrrel himſelf.

Hawkins had hitherto carefully avoided, notwithſtanding the injuries he had ſuffered, attempting to right himſelf by a legal proceſs, being of opinion that law was better adapted for a weapon of tyranny in the hands of the rich, than for a ſhield to protect the humbler part of the community againſt their uſurpations. In this laſt inſtance however he conceived that the offence was ſo atrocious as to make it impoſſible that any rank could protect the culprit againſt the ſeverity of juſtice. In the ſequel he ſaw reaſon to applaud himſelf for his former inactivity in this reſpect, and to repent that any motive had been ſtrong enough to perſuade him into a contrary ſyſtem.

This was the very point to which Mr. Tyrrel wanted to bring him, and he could ſcarcely credit his good fortune, when he was told that Hawkins had entered an action. His congratulation upon this occaſion was immoderate, as he now conceived that the ruin of his late favourite was irretrievable. He conſulted his attorney, and urged him by every motive he could deviſe to employ the whole ſeries of his ſubterfuges in the preſent affair. The direct repelling

pelling of the charge exhibited againſt him was the leaſt part of his care; the buſineſs was, by affidavits, motions, pleas, demurrers, flaws and appeals, to protract the queſtion from term to term and from court to court. It would, as Mr. Tyrrel argued, be the diſgrace of a civilized country, if a gentleman, when inſolently attacked in law by the ſcum of the earth, could not convert the cauſe into a queſtion of the longeſt purſe, and ſtick in the ſkirts of his adverſary till he had reduced him to beggary.

Mr. Tyrrel however was by no means ſo far engroſſed by his law-ſuit, as to neglect other methods of proceeding offenſively againſt his tenant. Among the various expedients that ſuggeſted themſelves there was one, which, though it tended rather to torment than irreparably injure the ſufferer, was not rejected. This was derived from the particular ſituation of Hawkins's houſe, barns, ſtacks and out-houſes. Theſe were placed at the extremity of a ſtrip of land connecting them with the reſt of the farm, and were ſurrounded on three ſides by fields in the occupation of one of Mr. Tyrrel's tenants moſt devoted to the pleaſures of the landlord. The road to the market town ran at the bottom of the largeſt of theſe fields, and was directly in view of the front of the houſe. No inconvenience had yet ariſen from that circumſtance, as there had been a broad path time out of mind, that interſected this field, and led directly from Hawkins's houſe to the road. This path, or private road, was now by concert of Mr. Tyrrel and his obliging tenant ſhut up, ſo as to make Hawkins a ſort of priſoner in his own domains, and oblige him to go near a mile about for the purpoſes of his traffic.

Young Hawkins, the lad who had been the original ſubject of diſpute between his father and the

the ſquire, had much of his father's ſpirit, and felt an uncontroulable indignation againſt the ſucceſſive acts of deſpotiſm of which he was a witneſs. His reſentment of them was the greater, becauſe the ſufferings to which his parent was expoſed, all of them, flowed from affection to him, at the ſame time that he could not propoſe removing the ground of diſpute, as by ſo doing he would ſeem to fly in the face of his father's paternal kindneſs. Upon the preſent occaſion, without aſking any counſel but of his own impatient reſentment, he went in the middle of the night and removed all the obſtructions that had been placed in the way of the old path, broke the padlocks that had been fixed, and threw open the gates. In theſe operations he did not proceed unobſerved, and the next day a warrant was iſſued for apprehending him. He was accordingly carried before a bench of juſtices, and by them committed to the county jail, to take his trial for the burglary at the next aſſizes.

This was the finiſhing ſtroke to Hawkins's miſeries: as he was not deficient in courage, he had ſtood up againſt his other perſecutions without flinching. He was not unaware of the advantages which our laws and cuſtoms give to the rich over the poor in contentions of this kind. But, being once involved, there was a ſtubbornneſs in his nature that would not allow him to retract, and he ſuffered himſelf to hope rather than expect a favourable iſſue. But in this laſt event he was wounded in the point that was neareſt his heart. He had feared to have his ſon contaminated and debaſed by a ſervile ſtation, and he now ſaw him transferred to the ſeminary of a jail. He was even uncertain as to the iſſue of his impriſonment, and trembled to think what the tyranny of wealth might effect to blaſt his hopes for ever.

From

From this moment his heart died within him. He had truſted to perſevering induſtry and ſkill to ſave the wreck of his little property from the vulgar ſpite of his landlord. But he had now no longer any ſpirit to exert thoſe efforts which his ſituation more than ever required. Mr. Tyrrel proceeded without remiſſion in his machinations; Hawkins's affairs every day grew more deſperate; and the ſquire, watching the occaſion, took the earlieſt opportunity of ſeizing upon his remaining property in the mode of a diſtreſs for rent.

It was preciſely in this ſtage of the affair that Mr. Falkland and Mr. Tyrrel accidentally met in a private road near the habitation of the latter. They were on horſeback, and Mr. Falkland was going to the houſe of the unfortunate tenant who ſeemed upon the point of periſhing under his landlord's malice. He had been juſt made acquainted with the tale of this perſecution. It had indeed been an additional aggravation of Hawkins's calamity that Mr. Falkland, whoſe interference might otherwiſe have ſaved him, had been abſent from the neighbourhood for a conſiderable time. He had been three months in London, and from thence had gone to viſit his eſtates in another part of the iſland. The proud and ſelf-confident ſpirit of this poor fellow always diſpoſed him to depend as long as poſſible upon his own exertions. He had avoided applying to Mr. Falkland, or indeed indulging himſelf in any manner in communicating and bewailing his hard hap, in the beginning of the contention; and, when the extremity grew more urgent, and he would have been willing to recede in ſome degree from the ſtubbornneſs of his meaſures, he found it no longer in his power. After an abſence of conſiderable duration Mr. Falkland at length returned ſomewhat unexpectedly; and, having learned among the firſt articles of country intelligence

intelligence the diſtreſſes of this unfortunate yeoman, he reſolved to ride over to his houſe the next morning, and ſurprize him with all the relief it was in his power to beſtow.

At ſight of Mr. Tyrrel in this unexpected rencounter, his face reddened with indignation. His firſt feeling, as he afterwards ſaid, was to avoid him; but, finding that he muſt paſs him, he conceived that it would be a want of ſpirit and deſertion of duty not to acquaint him with his feelings on the preſent occaſion.

Mr. Tyrrel, ſaid he ſomewhat abruptly, I am ſorry for a piece of news which it has juſt been my fortune to hear.

Well, ſir, and what is that? What have I to do with your ſorrow?

A great deal, ſir. It is cauſed by the diſtreſſes of a poor tenant of your's, Hawkins. If your ſteward have proceeded without your authority, I think it right to inform you of what he has done; and, if he has had your authority, I would gladly perſuade you to think better of it.

Mr. Falkland, it would be quite as well if you would mind your own buſineſs, and leave me to mind mine. I want no monitor, and I will have none.

You miſtake, Mr. Tyrrel; I am minding my own buſineſs. If I ſee you fall into a pit, it is my buſineſs to draw you out, and ſave your life. If I ſee you purſuing a wrong line of conduct, it is my buſineſs to ſet you right and ſave your honour.

Zounds, ſir, do not think to put any of your conundrums upon me! Is not the man my tenant? Is not my eſtate my own? What ſignifies calling it mine, if I am not to have the direction of it? Sir, I pay for what I have; I owe no man a penny; and I will not put my eſtate to nurſe to you, nor the beſt he that wears a head.

Mr.

Mr. Tyrrel, I do not diſpute your authority; I do not deſire to dictate to you; I ſimply wiſh to do you a good office.

Do not deſire to dictate! no, nor you ſhall not, ſir. How dare you attempt to ſtop me upon the king's highway!

Sir, I know that you bear me no good will. I am but an ill mediator in this caſe, and ſhould not have ſought you. But, thus thruſt by accident in your way, I muſt have leave to tell you my thoughts.

True, ſir, I hate you. And what I hate you moſt for is this damned impertinence of pretending to be wiſer than every body elſe. Is not this a free country, and may not every body do as he likes?

Mr. Tyrrel, I know your humour, and will bear as much as I can. What do you mean, ſir, by a free country? I put no compulſion upon you. There is room enough; ride by me, if you pleaſe! Sir, I defy you not to hear me, while I tell you coolly and firmly, you are greatly to blame, and muſt change your mode of proceeding!

This is very extraordinary uſage! Sir, I am not to blame. You know nothing about the matter. Do you think I will let a paltry fellow like this Hawkins inſult me for nothing? Damn my ſoul, if I will not have the heart's blood of him!

It is very true, Mr. Tyrrel, that there is a diſtinction of ranks. I believe that diſtinction to be a good thing. But, however neceſſary it may be, we muſt acknowledge that it puts ſome hardſhips upon the lower orders of ſociety. It makes one's heart ache to think that one man is born to the inheritance of every ſuperfluity, while the whole ſhare of another, without any demerit of his, is drudgery and ſtarving; and that all this is indiſpenſable. We that are rich, Mr. Tyrrel, muſt do every thing in our power to lighten the yoke of theſe unfortunate

tunate people. We muſt not uſe the advantage that accident has given us, with an unmerciful hand. Poor wretches! they are preſſed almoſt beyond bearing as it is; and if we unfeelingly give another turn to the machine, they will be cruſhed into atoms.

This picture was not without its effect even upon the obdurate mind of Mr. Tyrrel.—Well, ſir, I am no tyrant. I know very well that tyranny is a bad thing. But you do not infer from thence that theſe people are to do as they pleaſe, and never to meet with their deſerts?

Mr. Tyrrel, I ſee that you are ſhaken in your animoſity. Suffer me to hail the new-born benevolence of your nature. Go with me to Hawkins: Do not let us talk of his deſerts! poor fellow! he has ſuffered almoſt all that human nature can endure. Let your forgiveneſs upon this occaſion be the earneſt of good neighbourhood and friendſhip between you and me.

No, ſir, I will not go. I own there is ſomething in what you ſay. I always knew you had the wit to make good your own ſtory, and tell a plauſible tale. But I will not be come over thus. It has always been my character, when I had once conceived a ſcheme of vengeance never to forego it; and I will not change that character. I took up Hawkins when every body forſook him, and made a man of him; and the ungrateful raſcal has only inſulted me for my pains. Curſe me, if ever I forgive him! It would be a good jeſt indeed, if I were to forgive the inſolence of my own creature, at the deſire of a man like you that has been my perpetual plague.

For God's ſake, Mr. Tyrrel, have ſome reaſon in your reſentment! Let us ſuppoſe that Hawkins has behaved unjuſtifiably, and inſulted you. Is that an offence that can never be expiated? Muſt

the

the father be ruined, and the ſon hanged, to glut your reſentment?

Damn me, ſir, but you may talk your heart out; you ſhall get nothing of me. I ſhall never forgive myſelf for having liſtened to you for a moment. I will ſuffer nobody to ſtop the ſtream of my reſentment; if I ever were to forgive him, it ſhould be at nobody's intreaty but my own. But, ſir, I never will. If he and all his family were at my feet, I would order them all to be hanged the next minute, if my power were as good as my will.

Very well, ſir, I have done. I have only to tell you beforehand that ſuch tyranny as your's will make you the univerſal abhorrence of mankind. You may hug yourſelf in your wealth and impunity, but be ſure the genuine ſenſe of the world will pierce through all your intrenchments, and fully avenge thoſe for whoſe blood you ſo cruelly thirſt. Good day to you.

Such was the conference of Mr. Falkland and Mr. Tyrrel reſpecting this odious tranſaction. In one part it ſeemed to promiſe a more favourable iſſue. But the rooted depravity of the one, and perhaps the haughty impatience of the other, ſoon put an end to this agreeable proſpect. For Mr. Tyrrel, the averſion he entertained for his accompliſhed neighbour hourly increaſed. It ſeemed as if, the more inconteſtibly his excellencies diſplayed themſelves, the more bitter and inexpiable was the abhorrence he conceived for him. Having ſet out with contempt, and perſuaded himſelf of the unpardonable injuſtice of thoſe by whom Mr. Falkland was eſteemed, he was probably anxious to exclude the evidence of his worth; and, as that evidence went on to increaſe, the ſtruggle became more painful, and the ſituation more excruciating. In this reſpect the ſtate of Mr. Tyrrel's mind was perhaps peculiarly critical; and, if we ſhould allow ourſelves

ourſelves to judge from the appearances exhibited in the preſent caſe, we ſhould be apt to lay it down as a ſort of general maxim, that the greateſt criminal, when he perpetrates the moſt atrocious act, is upon the very eve of yielding to the energy of truth, and relinquiſhing for ever his odious deſigns.

Mr. Falkland departed from this conference with a confirmed diſapprobation of the conduct of his neighbour, and an unalterable reſolution to do every thing in his power to relieve the diſtreſſes of Hawkins. But he was too late. When he arrived, he found the houſe already evacuated by its maſter. The family was removed nobody knew whither; Hawkins was abſconded; and, what was ſtill more extraordinary, the boy Hawkins had eſcaped on the very ſame day from the county jail. The enquiries Mr. Falkland ſet on foot after them were fruitleſs; no traces could be found of the cataſtrophe of theſe unhappy people. That cataſtrophe I ſhall have occaſion ſhortly to relate; and it will be found pregnant with horror, beyond what the blackeſt miſanthropy could readily have ſuggeſted.

I go on with my tale. I go on to relate thoſe incidents in which my own fate was ſo myſteriouſly involved. The temper of Mr. Tyrrel, ſoured with perpetual diſappointment, became every day more peeviſh, arrogant and moroſe. The reader has ſeen what it was in the commencement. But every thing has its limits beyond which it can augment no farther. I lift the curtain, and bring forward the laſt act of the tragedy.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

THE vices of Mr. Tyrrel, in their preſent ſtate of augmentation, were peculiarly exerciſed upon his domeſtics and dependents. But the principal ſufferer was Miſs Emily Melvile, the orphan daughter of his father's ſiſter. Miſs Melvile's mother had married unfortunately, or rather imprudently, againſt the conſent of her relations, all of whom had agreed to withdraw their countenance from her in conſequence of that precipitate ſtep. Her huſband had turned out to be no better than an adventurer; had ſpent her fortune, which in conſequence of the irreconcileableneſs of her family was leſs than he expected, and broken her heart. Her infant daughter was left without any reſource upon the wide world. In this ſituation the repreſentations of the people with whom ſhe happened to be placed prevailed upon Mrs. Tyrrel, the mother of the ſquire, to receive her into her family. In equity perhaps ſhe was entitled to that portion of fortune which her mother had forfeited by her imprudence, and which had gone to ſwell the property of the male repreſentative. But this idea had never entered into the conceptions of either mother or ſon. Mrs. Tyrrel conceived that ſhe performed an act of the moſt exalted benevolence in admitting Miſs Emily into a ſort of amphibious ſituation, which was neither preciſely that of a domeſtic, nor yet marked with the treatment that might ſeem due to one of the family.

She had not however at firſt been ſenſible of all the mortifications that might have been expected from

from her condition. Mrs. Tyrrel, though proud and imperious, was not ill-natured. The female, who lived in the family in the capacity of houſe-keeper, was a perſon who had ſeen better days, and whoſe diſpoſition was extremely upright and amiable. She early contracted a friendſhip for the little Emily, who was indeed for the moſt part committed to her care. Emily on her ſide fully repaid the affection of her inſtructreſs, and learned with great docility the little accompliſhments Mrs. Jakeman was able to communicate. But moſt of all ſhe imbibed her chearful and artleſs temper, that extracted the agreeable and encouraging from all events, and prompted her to communicate her ſentiments, which were never of the cynical caſt, without modification or diſguiſe. Beſide the advantages Emily derived from Mrs. Jakeman, ſhe was permitted to take leſſons from the maſters who came to Tyrrel Place for the inſtruction of her couſin; and, indeed, as the young gentleman was moſt frequently indiſpoſed to attend to them, they would commonly have had nothing to do, had it not been for the fortunate preſence of Miſs Melvile. Mrs. Tyrrel therefore encouraged the ſtudies of Emily on that ſcore; in addition to which ſhe imagined that this living exhibition of inſtruction might operate as an indirect allurement to her darling Barnabas, the only ſpecies of motive ſhe would ſuffer to be preſented.

Emily, as ſhe grew up, diſplayed an uncommon degree of ſenſibility, which under her circumſtances would have been a ſource of perpetual diſſatisfaction, had it not been qualified with an extreme ſweetneſs and eaſineſs of temper. She was far from being entitled to the appellation of a beauty. Her perſon was *petite* and trivial; her complexion favoured of the *brunette*; and her face was marked with the ſmall pox, ſufficiently to deſtroy its even-

neſs

neſs and poliſh, though not enough to annihilate its expreſſion. But, though her appearance was not beautiful, it did not fail to be in a high degree engaging. Her complexion was at once healthful and delicate; her long dark eye-brows adapted themſelves with facility to the various conceptions of her mind; and her looks bore the united impreſſion of an active diſcernment and a good-humoured frankneſs. The inſtruction ſhe had received, as it was entirely of a caſual nature, exempted her from the evils of untutored ignorance, but not from a ſort of native wildneſs, arguing a mind incapable of guile itſelf, or of ſuſpecting it in others. She amuſed, without ſeeming conſcious of the refined ſenſe which her obſervations contained: or rather having never been debauched with applauſe, ſhe ſet light by her own qualifications; and talked from the pure gaiety of a youthful heart acting upon the ſtores of a juſt underſtanding, and not with any expectation of being diſtinguiſhed and admired.

The death of her aunt made very little change in her ſituation. This prudent lady, who would have thought it little leſs than ſacrilege to have conſidered miſs Melvile as a branch of the ſtock of the Tyrrels, took no other notice of her in her will, than barely putting her down for a hundred pounds in a catalogue of legacies to her ſervants. She had never been admitted into the intimacy and confidence of Mrs. Tyrrel; and the young ſquire, now that ſhe was left under his ſole protection, ſeemed inclined to treat her with even more liberality than his mother had done. He had ſeen her grow up under his eye, and therefore, though there were but ſix years difference between their ages, he felt a kind of paternal intereſt in her welfare. Habit had rendered her in a manner neceſſary to him, and in every receſs from the occupations of the field

field and the pleaſures of the table, he found himſelf ſolitary and forlorn without the ſociety of miſs Melvile. Nearneſs of kindred and Emily's want of perſonal beauty prevented him from ever looking on her with the eyes of deſire. Her accompliſhments were chiefly of the cuſtomary and ſuperficial kind, dancing and muſic. Her ſkill in the firſt led him ſometimes to indulge her with a vacant corner in his carriage when he went to the neighbouring aſſembly; and, in whatever light he might himſelf think proper to regard her, he would have imagined his chambermaid, introduced by him, entitled to an undoubted place in the moſt ſplendid circle. Her muſical talents were frequently employed for his amuſement. She had the honour occaſionally of playing him to ſleep after the fatigues of the chace; and as he had ſome reliſh for harmonious ſounds, ſhe was frequently able to ſoothe him by their means from the perturbations of which his gloomy diſpoſition was ſo eminently a ſlave. Upon the whole ſhe might be conſidered as in ſome ſort his favourite. She was the mediator to whom his tenants and domeſtics, when they had incurred his diſpleaſure, were accuſtomed to apply; the privileged companion that could handle this lion with impunity in the midſt of his roarings. She ſpoke to him without fear; her ſolicitations were always good-natured and diſintereſted; and when he repulſed her, he diſarmed himſelf of half his terrors, and was contented to ſmile at her preſumption.

Such had been for ſome years the ſituation of Miſs Melvile. Its precarioufneſs had been beguiled, by the chearfulneſs of her own temper, and the uncommon forbearance with which ſhe was treated by her ſavage protector. But his diſpoſition, always brutal, had acquired a new degree of ferocity ſince the ſettlement of Mr. Falkland in his neighbour-

neighbourhood. He occaſionally forgot the gentleneſs with which he had been accuſtomed to treat his good-natured couſin. Her little playful arts were not always ſucceſsful in ſoftening his rage; and he would ſometimes turn upon her blandiſhment with an impatient ſternneſs that made her tremble. The careleſs eaſe of her diſpoſition however ſoon effaced theſe impreſſions, and ſhe fell without variation into her old habits.

A circumſtance occurred about this time which put an end to the felicity, that miſs Melvile in ſpite of the frowns of fortune had hitherto enjoyed. Emily was exactly ſeventeen when Mr. Falkland returned from the Continent. At this age ſhe was peculiarly ſuſceptible of the charms of beauty, grace and moral excellence, when united in a perſon of the other ſex. She was imprudent, preciſely becauſe her own heart was incapable of guile. She had never yet felt the ſting of the poverty to which ſhe was condemned, and had not reflected on the inſuperable diſtance that fortune has placed between the opulent and the poorer claſſes of the community. She beheld Mr. Falkland, whenever he was thrown in her way at any of the public meetings with admiration; and, without having preciſely explained to herſelf the ſentiments ſhe indulged, her eyes followed him through all the changes of the ſcene with eagerneſs and impatience. She did not ſee him, as the reſt of the aſſembly did, born to one of the ampleſt eſtates in the county, and qualified to aſſert his title to the richeſt heireſs. She thought only of Falkland, with thoſe advantages which were moſt intimately his own, and of which no perſecution of adverſe fortune had the ability to deprive him. In a word ſhe was tranſported when he was preſent; he was the perpetual ſubject of her reveries and her dreams; but

his

his image excited no ſentiment in her mind beyond that of the immediate pleaſure annexed to the idea.

The notice Mr. Falkland had taken of her in return appeared ſufficiently encouraging to a mind ſo full of prepoſſeſſion as that of Emily. There was a particular complacency in his looks when directed towards her. He had ſaid in a company, of which one of the perſons preſent repeated his remarks to Miſs Melvile, that ſhe appeared to him amiable and intereſting, that he felt for her unprovided and deſtitute ſituation, and that he ſhould have been glad to be more particular in his notice of her, had he not been apprehenſive of doing her a prejudice in the ſuſpicious mind of Mr. Tyrrel. All this ſhe treated as the raviſhing condeſcenſion of a ſuperior nature; for, if ſhe did not recollect with ſufficient aſſiduity his gifts of fortune, ſhe was on the other hand filled with reverence for his unrivalled accompliſhments. But, while ſhe thus ſeemingly diſclaimed all compariſon between Mr. Falkland and herſelf, ſhe probably cheriſhed a confuſed idea that ſome event was yet in the womb of fate which might reconcile things apparently the moſt incompatible. Fraught with theſe prepoſſeſſions, the civilities that had once or twice occurred in the buſtle of a public circle, the reſtoring her fan which ſhe had dropped, or the diſcommoding her of an empty tea-cup, made her heart palpitate, and gave birth to the wildeſt chimeras in her deluded imagination.

About this time an event happened that helped to give a preciſe determination to the fluctuations of Miſs Melvile's mind. One evening, a ſhort time after the death of Mr. Clare, Mr. Falkland had been to the houſe of his deceaſed friend in his quality of executor, and by ſome accidents of little intrinſic importance had been detained three or

four hours later than he intended. He did not ſet out upon his return till two o'clock in the morning. At this time, in a ſituation ſo remote from the metropolis, every thing is as ſilent as it would be in a region wholly uninhabited. The moon ſhone bright, and the objects around, being marked with ſtrong variations of light and ſhade at the ſame time that they were not diſtinctly ſeen, gave a kind of ſacred ſolemnity to the ſcene. Mr. Falkland had taken Collins with him, the buſineſs to be ſettled at Mr. Clare's being in ſome reſpects ſimilar to that to which this faithful domeſtic had been accuſtomed in the routine of his ordinary ſervice. They had entered into ſome converſation, for Mr. Falkland was not then in the habit of obliging the perſons about him by formality and reſerve to recollect who he was. The attractions of the ſcene made them break off the talk ſomewhat abruptly, that they might enjoy it without interruption. They had not rode far, before a hollow wind ſeemed to riſe at a diſtance, and they could hear the hoarſe roarings of the ſea. Preſently the ſky on one ſide aſſumed the appearance of a reddiſh brown, and a ſudden angle in the road placed this phenomenon directly before them. As they proceeded it became more diſtinct, and it was at length ſufficiently viſible that it was occaſioned by a fire. Mr. Falkland put ſpurs to his horſe; and, as they approached, the object preſented every inſtant a more tremendous appearance. The flames aſcended with fierceneſs; they embraced a large portion of the horizon; and, as they carried up along with them numerous little fragments of the materials that fed them, impregnated with fire, and of an extremely bright and luminous colour, they preſented no inadequate image of the eruption of a volcano.

The flames proceeded from a village directly in their road. There were eight or ten houſes already on fire, and the whole ſeemed to be threatened with immediate deſtruction. The inhabitants were in the utmoſt conſternation, having had no previous experience of a ſimilar calamity. They conveyed with haſte their moveables and furniture into the adjoining fields, the whole ſurface of which was heated to an uncommon degree. When any of them had effected this as far as it could be attempted with ſafety, they were unable to conceive any farther remedy, but ſtood wringing their hands and contemplating the ravages of the fire in an agony of powerleſs deſpair. The water that could be procured in any mode practiſed in that place, was but as a drop contending with a whole element in arms. The wind in the mean time was riſing, and the flames ſpread with more and more rapidity.

Mr. Falkland contemplated this ſcene for a few minutes, as if ruminating with himſelf as to what could be done. He then directed ſome of the country people about him to pull down a houſe, next to one that was wholly on fire, but which itſelf was not yet touched. They ſeemed aſtoniſhed at a direction which implied a voluntary deſtruction of property, and conſidered the taſk as too much in the heart of the danger to be undertaken. Obſerving that they were motionleſs, he diſmounted from his horſe, and called upon them in an authoritative voice to follow him. He aſcended the houſe in an inſtant, and preſently appeared upon the top of it as if in the midſt of the flames. Having, with the aſſiſtance of two or three of the perſons that followed him moſt cloſely, and who by this time had ſupplied themſelves with whatever tools came next to hand, looſened the ſupport of a ſtack of chimnies, he puſhed them headlong into

the midſt of the fire. He paſſed and repaſſed along the roof; and, having ſet people to work on all parts, deſcended in order to ſee what could be done in any other quarter.

At this moment an elderly woman burſt from the midſt of a houſe in flames. The utmoſt conſternation was painted in her looks; and, as ſoon as ſhe could recollect herſelf enough to have a proper idea of her ſituation, the ſubject of her anxiety ſeemed in an inſtant to be totally changed. Where is my child? cried ſhe, and caſt an anxious and piercing look among the ſurrounding crowd. Oh, ſhe is loſt! ſhe is in the midſt of the flames! Save her! ſave her! my child! She filled the air with heart-rending ſhrieks. She turned towards the houſe. The people that were near endeavoured to prevent her, but ſhe ſhook them off in a moment. She entered the paſſage; viewed the hideous ruin; and was then going to plunge into the blazing ſtaircaſe. Mr. Falkland ſeized her arm; it was Mrs. Jakeman. Stop! he cried, with a voice that ſeemed more than human. Stay you here! I will ſeek, I will ſave her! He charged the attendants to detain Mrs. Jakeman; he enquired which was the apartment of Emily. Mrs. Jakeman was upon a viſit to a ſiſter who lived in the village, and had brought Emily along with her. Mr. Falkland aſcended a neighbouring houſe; entered that in which Emily was, by a window in the roof; and in two minutes re-appeared with his lovely burthen in his arms. Having reſtored her to her affectionate protector ſnatched from the immediate graſp of death, from which, if he had not, none would have delivered her, he returned to his former taſk. By his preſence of mind, by his indefatigable humanity and inceſſant exertions, he ſaved three-fourths of the village from deſtruction. The conflagration being at length abated, he ſought again

again Mrs. Jakeman and Emily. He diſplayed the tendereſt ſolicitude for the young lady's ſafety, and directed Collins to go with as much ſpeed as he could, and ſend his chariot to attend her. More than an hour elapſed in this interval. Miſs Melvile had never ſeen ſo much of Mr. Falkland upon any former occaſion, and the ſpectacle of ſuch humanity, delicacy, firmneſs and juſtice in the form of man, as he crowded into this ſmall ſpace, was both altogether new to her, and in the higheſt degree faſcinating.

Emily no ſooner arrived at the family manſion, than Mr. Tyrrel ran out to receive her. He had juſt heard of the melancholy accident that had taken place at the village, and was terrified for the ſafety of his good-humoured couſin. He diſplayed thoſe unpremeditated emotions which are common to almoſt every individual of the human race. He was greatly ſhocked at the ſuſpicion that Emily might poſſibly have become the victim of a cataſtrophe which had thus broken out in the very dead of night. His ſenſations were of the moſt pleaſing ſort, when he folded her in his arms, and fearful apprehenſion was inſtantaneouſly converted into joyous certainty. Emily no ſooner entered the well-known roof, than ſhe forgot all ſhe had ſuffered; her ſpirits were briſk, and her tongue inceſſant in deſcribing her danger and her deliverance. Mr. Tyrrel had formerly been tortured with the innocent eulogiums ſhe pronounced of Mr. Falkland. But theſe were tameneſs itſelf, compared with the rich and various eloquence that now flowed from her lips. She deſcribed his activity and his reſources, the promptitude with which every thing was conceived, and the cautious, but daring wiſdom with which it was executed. All was fairy-land and enchantment in the tenour of her artleſs tale; you ſaw a beneficent genius ſurveying

veying and controuling the whole, but could have no notion of any human means by which his purpoſes were effected.

Mr. Tyrrel liſtened for a while to theſe innocent effuſions with patience; he could even bear to hear the man applauded by whom he had juſt obtained ſo conſiderable a benefit. But the theme by amplification became nauſeous, and he was at length obliged with ſome roughneſs to put an end to the tale. Probably upon recollection it appeared ſtill more inſolent and intolerable than while it was paſſing; the ſenſation of gratitude wore off, but the hyperbolical praiſe that had been beſtowed ſtill haunted his memory, and ſounded in his ear: Emily ſeemed to have entered into the confederacy that diſturbed his repoſe. As for the young lady herſelf, ſhe was wholly unconſcious of the offence that had been given, and upon every occaſion quoted Mr. Falkland as the model of elegant manners and true wiſdom. She was a total ſtranger to diſſimulation; and ſhe could not conceive that any body beheld the object of her admiration with leſs partiality than her inexperienced heart had entertained. Meanwhile her artleſs love became more fervent than ever. She flattered herſelf that nothing leſs than a reciprocal paſſion could have prompted Mr. Falkland to the deſperate attempt of ſaving her from the flames; and ſhe truſted that this paſſion would ſpeedily burſt the barriers of ſilence, as well as induce the object of her affection to overlook her comparative unworthineſs.

Mr. Tyrrel endeavoured at firſt to check Miſs Melvile in her applauſes, and to convince her by various tokens that the ſubject was diſagreeable to him. Emily was accuſtomed to yield implicit and unreluctant obedience, and therefore it was not difficult to reſtrain her; but upon the very next occaſion her favourite topic would force its way to her

her lips. Her obedience was the acquieſcence of a frank and benevolent heart; but it was the moſt difficult thing in the world to inſpire her with fear. Conſcious herſelf that ſhe would not hurt a worm, ſhe could not conceive that any one would harbour cruelty and rancour againſt her. Her temper preſerved her from obſtinate contention with the perſons under whoſe protection ſhe was placed; and, as her compliance was unheſitating, ſhe had had no experience of a ſevere and rigorous treatment. As Mr. Tyrrel's objection to the very name of Falkland became more palpable and uniform, Miſs Melvile increaſed in her precaution. She would ſtop herſelf in the half-pronounced ſentences that were meant to his praiſe. This circumſtance had neceſſarily an ungracious effect; it was a cutting ſatire upon the imbecility of her kinſman. Upon theſe occaſions ſhe would ſometimes venture upon a good-humoured expoſtulation: Dear ſir! well, I wonder how you can be ſo ill-natured! I am ſure Mr. Falkland would do you any good office in the world: till ſhe was checked by ſome geſture of impatience and fierceneſs.

At length ſhe wholly conquered her heedleſſneſs and inattention. But it was now too late. Mr. Tyrrel already ſuſpected the exiſtence of that paſſion which ſhe had thoughtleſsly imbibed. His imagination, ingenious in torment, ſuggeſted to him all the different openings in converſation in which ſhe would have introduced the praiſe of Mr. Falkland, had ſhe not been placed under this unnatural reſtraint. Her preſent reſerve upon the ſubject was more inſufferable than even her former loquacity. All his kindneſs for this unhappy orphan gradually ſubſided. Her partiality for the man who of all others was moſt the object of his hatred, appeared to him as the laſt perſecution of a malicious deſtiny. He figured himſelf as about

to

to be deſerted by every creature in human form, all men under the influence of a fatal enchantment approving only what was ſophiſticated and artificial, and holding the rude and genuine offſpring of nature in mortal antipathy. Impreſſed with theſe gloomy preſages, he ſaw miſs Melvile with no ſentiments but thoſe of rancorous abhorrence; and, accuſtomed as he was to the uncontrouled indulgence of all his propenſities, determined to wreak upon her a ſignal revenge.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

MR. TYRREL conſulted his old confident reſpecting the plan he ſhould purſue, who on his part felt no compunction upon the ſubject, nor had any idea that an inſignificant girl, without either wealth or beauty, ought to be allowed for a moment to ſtand in the way of the gratifications of a man of Mr. Tyrrel's importance. The firſt idea of her now-unrelenting kinſman was to thruſt her from his doors, and leave her to ſeek her bread in the wide world. But he was conſcious that this proceeding would involve him in conſiderable obloquy; and he at length fixed upon a ſcheme which, at the ſame time that he believed it would ſufficiently ſhelter his reputation, would much more certainly ſecure her mortification and puniſhment.

For this purpoſe he fixed upon a young man of twenty, the ſon of one Grimes, who occupied a ſmall farm the property of his confident. This fellow he reſolved to impoſe as a huſband on Miſs Melvile, who he ſhrewdly ſuſpected, guided by the tender ſentiments ſhe had unfortunately conceived for Mr. Falkland, would liſten with reluctance to any matrimonial propoſal. Grimes he ſelected as being in all reſpects the diametrical reverſe of Mr. Falkland. He was not preciſely a lad of vicious propenſities, but in an inconceivable degree booriſh and uncouth. His complexion was ſcarcely human; his features were coarſe, and ſtrangely diſcordant and disjointed from each other. His lips were thick, and the tone of his voice broad

and unmodulated. His legs were of equal ſize from one end to the other, and his feet miſhapen and clumſy. He had nothing ſpiteful or malicious in his diſpoſition, but he was a total ſtranger to tenderneſs; he could not feel for thoſe refinements in others, of which he had no experience in himſelf. He was an expert boxer; his inclination led him to ſuch amuſements as were moſt boiſterous; and he delighted in a ſort of manual ſarcaſm, which he could not conceive to be very injurious, as it left no traces behind it. His general manners were noiſy and obſtreperous; inattentive to others; and obſtinate and unyielding, not from any cruelty and ruggedneſs of temper, but from an incapacity to conceive thoſe finer feelings that make ſo large a part of the hiſtory of perſons who are caſt in a gentler mould.

Such was the uncouth and half-civiliſed animal which the induſtrious malice of Mr. Tyrrel fixed upon as moſt happily adapted to his purpoſe. Emily had hitherto been in an unuſual degree exempted from the oppreſſion of deſpotiſm. Her happy inſignificance had ſerved her as a protection. No one thought it worth his while to fetter her with thoſe numerous petty reſtrictions, with which the daughters of opulence are commonly tormented. She had the wildneſs as well as the delicate frame of the bird that warbles unmoleſted in its native groves.

When therefore ſhe heard from her kinſman the propoſal of Mr. Grimes for a huſband, ſhe was for a moment ſilent with aſtoniſhment at ſo unexpected a ſuggeſtion. But, as ſoon as ſhe recovered her ſpeech, ſhe replied: No, ſir, I thank you. Bleſs me! I do not want a huſband: I am but a child.

You are a woman! Are not you always hankering after the men? It is high time you ſhould be ſettled.

Mr.

Mr. Grimes is ſuch a ſtrange man. Why, I do not know what he is like! He is like for all the world a great huge porpuſs. No, I thank you! when I do have a huſband, it ſhall not be ſuch a man as Grimes neither.

Be ſilent! How dare you give your tongue ſuch unaccountable liberties?

Well, I wonder what I ſhould do with him. Why, it is like as if you ſhould give me your great rough water-dog, and bid me make him a ſilk cuſhion to lie on in my dreſſing-room. Beſide, ſir, Grimes is a common labouring man, and I am ſure I have always heard my aunt ſay that ours is a very great family.

It is a lie. Our family! Have you the impudence to think yourſelf one of our family?

Lord, ſir! was not your grandpapa my grandpapa? And how then can we be of a different family?

For a damned ſtrong reaſon. You are the daughter of a raſcally Scotchman, who ſpent every ſhilling of my aunt Hannah's fortune, and left you a beggar. You have got a hundred pounds, and Grimes's father promiſes to give him as much. How dare you look down upon your equals?

Nay, now, ſir, I am ſure I am not proud. But indeed and indeed, ſir, I can never love Mr. Grimes. Dear, dear! he is more like a cart-horſe than a huſband. I am very happy as I am. I love you, and I love Mrs. Jakeman: why ſhould I be married?

Ceaſe your prating! Grimes will be here this afternoon. Look that you behave well to him. If you do not, he will remember and repay when you leaſt like it.

Now, I am ſure, ſir, you—you are not in earneſt?

Not

Not in earneſt! Damn me but we will ſee that. I can tell what you would be at. You had rather be Mr. Falkland's miſs, than the wife of a plain downright yeoman. But I ſhall take care of you. —Aye, this comes of indulgence. You muſt be taken down, miſs. You muſt be taught the difference between high-flown notions and realities. Mayhap you may take it a little in dudgeon or ſo. But never mind that. Pride always wants a little ſmarting. If you ſhould be brought to ſhame, it is I that ſhall bear all the blame of it.

The tone in which Mr. Tyrrel ſpoke was ſo different from any thing to which Miſs Melvile had been accuſtomed, that ſhe felt herſelf wholly unable to determine what conſtruction to put upon it. Sometimes ſhe thought he had really formed a plan for impoſing upon her a condition, that ſhe could not bear ſo much as to think of. But preſently ſhe rejected this idea as an unworthy imputation upon her kinſman, and concluded that it was only his way, and that all he meant was to try her. To be reſolved however ſhe determined to conſult her conſtant adviſer, Mrs. Jakeman, and accordingly repeated to her what had paſſed. Mrs. Jakeman ſaw the whole in a very different light from that in which Emily had conceived it, and trembled for the future peace of her beloved ward.

Lord bleſs me, my dear mamma! cried Emily, (this was the appellation ſhe delighted to beſtow upon the good houſe-keeper) ſure you cannot think ſo. But I do not care. I will never marry Grimes let them do as they will.

But how will you help yourſelf? My maſter will oblige you.

Nay, now you think you are talking to a child indeed. It is I am to have the man, not Mr. Tyrrel. Do you think I will let any body elſe

chooſe

chooſe a huſband for me? I am not ſuch a fool as that neither.

Ah, Emily! you little know the diſadvantages of your ſituation. Your couſin is a violent man, and perhaps will turn you out of doors, if you oppoſe him.

Oh, mamma, it is very wicked of you to ſay ſo. I am ſure Mr. Tyrrel is a very good man, though he be a little croſs now and then. He knows very well that I am right to have a will of my own in ſuch a thing as this, and nobody is puniſhed for doing what is right.

Nobody ought, my dear child. But there are very wicked and tyrannical men in the world.

Well, well, I will never believe that my couſin is one of thoſe.

I hope he is not.

And, if he were, what then? To be ſure I ſhould be very ſorry to make him angry.

What then? Why then my poor, dear Emily would be a beggar. Do you think I could bear to ſee that?

No, no. Mr. Tyrrel has juſt told me that I have a hundred pounds. But, if I had no fortune at all, is not that the caſe with a thouſand other folks? Why ſhould I grieve, for what they bear and are merry? Do not make yourſelf uneaſy, mamma. I am determined that I will do any thing rather than marry Grimes however; that is what I will.

Mrs. Jakeman could not bear the uneaſy ſtate of ſuſpenſe in which this converſation left her mind, and went immediately to the ſquire to have her doubts reſolved. The manner in which ſhe propoſed the queſtion ſufficiently indicated the judgment ſhe had formed of the match in queſtion.

That is true, ſaid Mr. Tyrrel, I wanted to ſpeak to you about this affair. The girl has got unaccountable

countable notions in her head, that will be the ruin of her. You perhaps can tell where ſhe had them. But, be that as it may, it is high time ſomething ſhould be done. The ſhorteſt way is the beſt, and to keep things well while they are well. In ſhort, I am determined ſhe ſhall marry this lad: you do not know any harm of him, do you? You have a good deal of influence with her, and I deſire, do you ſee! that you will employ it to lead her to her good: you had beſt, I can tell you. She is a pert vixen! By and by ſhe would be a whore, and at laſt no better than a common trull, and rot upon a dunghill, if I were not at all theſe pains to ſave her from deſtruction. I would make her an honeſt farmer's wife, and my pretty miſs cannot bear the thoughts of it!

In the afternoon Grimes came according to appointment, and was left alone with the young lady. Well, miſs, ſaid he, it ſeems the ſquire has a mind to make us man and wife. For my part, I cannot ſay I ſhould have thought of it. But, being as how the ſquire has broke the ice, if ſo be as you like of the match, why I am your man. Say the word; a nod is as good as a wink to a blind horſe; and then, do you ſee, why there is no more to be ſaid.

Emily was already ſufficiently mortified at the unexpected propoſal of Mr. Tyrrel. She was confounded at the novelty of the ſituation, and ſtill more at the uncultivated rudeneſs of her lover, which even exceeded her expectation. This confuſion was interpreted by Grimes into diffidence.

Come, come, never be caſt down. Put a good face upon it. What though? My firſt ſweetheart was Bet Butterfield, but what of that? What muſt be muſt be; grief will never fill the belly. She was a fine ſtrapping wench, that is the truth of it! Five foot ten inches, and as ſtout as a trooper.

trooper. Oh, ſhe would do a power of work! Up early and down late; milked ten cows with her own hands; on with her cardinal, rode to market between her panniers, fair weather and foul, hail, blow or ſnow. It would have done your heart good to have ſeen her froſt-bitten cheeks, as red as a beefen from her own orchard! Ah, ſhe was a maid of mettle; would romp with the harveſt men, ſlap one upon the back, wreſtle with another, and had a rogue's trick and a joke for all round. Poor girl! ſhe broke her neck down ſtairs at a chriſtening. To be ſure I ſhall never meet with her fellow! But never you mind that! I do not doubt that I ſhall find more in you upon farther acquaintance. As coy and baſhful as you ſeem, I dare ſay you are rogue enough at bottom. When I have touzled and rumpled you a little, we ſhall ſee. I am no chicken, miſs, whatever you may think me. I know what is what, and can ſee as far into a milſtone as another. Ay, ay; you will come to. The fiſh will ſnap at the bait, never doubt it. Yes, yes, we ſhall rub on main well together.

Emily by this time had in ſome degree muſtered up her ſpirits, and began, though with heſitation, to thank Mr. Grimes for his good opinion, but to confeſs that ſhe could never be brought to favour his addreſſes. She therefore intreated him to deſiſt from all farther application. This remonſtrance on her part would have become more intelligible, had it not been for his boiſterous manners and extravagant chearfulneſs, which indiſpoſed him to ſilence, and made him ſuppoſe that at half a word he had a ſufficient intimation of another's meaning. Mr. Tyrrel in the mean time took care to interrupt the ſcene before they could have time to proceed far in explanation, and was ſtudious in the ſequel to prevent the young folks from being too intimately

acquainted

acquainted with each other's inclinations. Grimes of conſequence attributed all the reluctance of miſs Melvile to maiden coyneſs, and the ſkittiſh ſhyneſs of an unbroken colt. Indeed had it been otherwiſe, it is not probable that it would have made any effectual impreſſion upon him; as he was always accuſtomed to talk of women as made for the recreation of the men, and to exclaim againſt the ill-judged weakneſs of people who taught them to imagine that they were entitled to judge for themſelves.

As the ſuit proceeded and miſs Melvile ſaw more of her new admirer, her antipathy increaſed. But, though her character was unſpoiled by thoſe falſe wants which frequently make people of family miſerable while they have every thing that nature requires within their reach, yet ſhe had been little uſed to oppoſition, and was really terrified by the growing ſternneſs of her kinſman. Sometimes ſhe thought of flying from a houſe which was now become her dungeon; but the habits of her youth, and her ignorance of the world made her ſhrink from this project when ſhe contemplated it more nearly. Mrs. Jakeman indeed could not think with patience of young Grimes as a huſband for her darling Emily, but her prudence determined her to reſiſt with all her might the idea on the part of the young lady of proceeding to extremities. She could not believe that Mr. Tyrrel would perſiſt in ſuch an unaccountable perſecution, and ſhe exhorted miſs Melvile to forget for a moment the unaffected independence of her character, and pathetically to deprecate Mr. Tyrrel's obſtinacy. She had great confidence in the ingenuous eloquence of her ward. Mrs. Jakeman did not know what was paſſing in the mind of the tyrant.

Miſs Melvile complied with the ſuggeſtion of her mamma. One morning immediately after breakfaſt

faſt ſhe went to the harpſichord, and played one after another ſeveral of thoſe airs that were moſt the favourites of Mr. Tyrrel. Mrs. Jakeman was retired; the ſervants were gone to their reſpective employments. Mr. Tyrrel would have gone alſo; his mind was untuned, and he did not take the pleaſure he had been accuſtomed to take in the muſical performances of Emily. But her finger was now more taſteful than common. Her mind was probably wrought up to a firmer and bolder tone by the recollection of the cauſe ſhe was going to plead, at the ſame time that it was exempt from thoſe incapacitating tremors which would have been felt by one that dared not look poverty in the face. Mr. Tyrrel was unable to leave the apartment. Sometimes he traverſed it with impatient ſtep; then he hung over the poor innocent whoſe powers were exerted to pleaſe him; at length he threw himſelf in a chair oppoſite, with his eyes turned towards Emily. It was eaſy to trace the progreſs of his emotions. The furrows into which his countenance was contracted were gradually relaxed; his features were brightened into a ſmile; the kindneſs with which he had upon former occaſions contemplated Emily ſeemed to revive in his heart.

Emily watched her opportunity. As ſoon as ſhe had finiſhed one of the pieces, ſhe roſe and went to Mr. Tyrrel.

Now have I not done it nicely? And after all this will not you give me a reward?

A reward! Ay, come here, and I will give you a kiſs.

Pooh! no, that is not it. And yet you have not kiſſed me this many a day. Formerly you ſaid you loved me, and called me your Emily. I am ſure you did not love me better than I loved you. You would not make me miſerable, would you?

Miſera-

Miſerable! how can you aſk ſuch a queſtion? But have a care! Do not put me out of humour. Do not come with any of your romantic notions now.

No, no. I had no romantic notions in my head. I want to ſpeak to you about ſomething upon which the happineſs of my life depends.

I know what you would be at. Be ſilent. You know it is to no purpoſe to plague me with your ſtubbornneſs. You will not let me be in good humour with you for a moment. What my mind is determined on about Grimes, all the world ſhall not move me to give up.

Dear, dear couſin, why do but conſider now. Grimes is a rough ruſtic lout, like Orſon in the ſtory-book. He wants a wife like himſelf. He would be as uneaſy and as much at a loſs with me, as I with him. Why ſhould we both of us be forced to do what neither of us is inclined to? I cannot think what could ever have put it in your head. But now, for goodneſs' ſake, give it up. Marriage is a ſerious thing. You ſhould not think of joining two people for a whim, who are neither of them fit for one another in any reſpect in the world. We ſhould feel mortified and diſappointed all our lives. Month would go after month, and year after year, and I could never hope to be my own but by the death of a perſon I ought to love. I am ſure, ſir, you cannot mean me all this harm. What have I done, that I ſhould deſerve to have you for this enemy?

I am not your enemy. I tell you that it is neceſſary to put you out of harm's way. But, if I were your enemy, I could not be a worſe torment to you than you are to me. Are not you continually ſinging the praiſes of Falkland? Are not you in love with Falkland? That man is a legion of devils to me! Plauſible and empty himſelf, he cheats

cheats every body, he croſſes me in all my wiſhes; he runs away with the applauſe of the men, and the admiration of your fooliſh ſex. An unſpoiled, genuine country-gentleman has no chance with him. I might as well have been a beggar! I might as well have been a dwarf or a monſter! Time was when I was thought entitled to reſpect. But now, debauched by this Frenchified raſcal, they call me rude, ſurly, brutal, a tyrant! It is true that I cannot talk in theſe finical phraſes, flatter people with hypocritical praiſe, or ſuppreſs the real feelings of my mind! The ſcoundrel knows all his pitiful advantages, and inſults me upon them without ceaſing. He is my rival and my perſecutor. And at laſt, as if all this were not enough, he has found means to ſpread the peſtilence in my own family. You, whom we took up out of charity, the chance-born brat of a ſtolen marriage! you, muſt turn upon your benefactor, and wound me in the point where of all others I could leaſt bear it. If I were your enemy, ſhould I not have reaſon? Could I ever inflict upon you ſuch injuries as you have made me ſuffer? And who are you? The lives of twenty ſuch as you cannot atone for an hour of my uneaſineſs. If you were to linger for twenty years upon the rack, you would never feel what I have felt. But I am your friend. I ſee which way you are going, and I am determined to ſave you from the thief, the hypocritical deſtroyer of us all. Every moment that the miſchief is left to itſelf it does but make bad worſe, and I am determined to ſave you out of hand.

The angry expoſtulations of Mr. Tyrrel ſuggeſted new ideas to the tender mind of miſs Melvile. He had never confeſſed the emotions of his ſoul ſo explicitly before; but the growing tempeſt of his thoughts ſuffered him to be no longer maſter of himſelf. She ſaw with aſtoniſhment that he was the

the irreconcilable foe of Mr. Falkland, whom ſhe fondly imagined it was the ſame thing to know and admire; and that he harboured a deep and rooted reſentment againſt herſelf. She recoiled without well knowing why before the ferocious paſſions of her kinſman, and was convinced that ſhe had nothing to hope from his implacable temper. But her alarm was the prelude of firmneſs and not of cowardice.

No, ſir, replied ſhe, indeed I will not be driven any way that you happen to like. I have been uſed to obey you, and in any thing that is reaſonable I will obey you ſtill. But you urge me a little too far. Why do you tell me of Mr. Falkland? Have I ever done any thing to deſerve your unkind ſuſpicions? I am innocent, and will continue innocent. Mr. Grimes is well enough, and will no doubt find women that like him. But he is not fit for me, and torture ſhall not force me to be his wife.

Mr. Tyrrel was not a little aſtoniſhed at the ſpirit which Emily diſplayed upon this occaſion. He had calculated too ſecurely upon the general mildneſs and ſuavity of her diſpoſition. He now endeavoured to qualify the harſhneſs of his former ſentiments.

G— damn my ſoul! And ſo you can ſcold can you? You expect every body to turn out of his way, and fetch and carry, juſt as you pleaſe? I could find in my heart to break your heart. But you know my mind. I inſiſt upon it that you let Grimes court you, and that you lay aſide your ſulks, and give him a fair hearing. Will you do that? If then you perſiſt in your wilfulneſs, why there, I ſuppoſe, is an end of the matter. Do not think that any body is going to marry you, whether you will or no. You are no ſuch mighty prize, I aſſure you. If you knew your own intereſt, you would

would be glad to take the young fellow, while he is willing.

Miſs Melvile rejoiced in the proſpect which the laſt words of her kinſman afforded her, of a termination at no great diſtance to her preſent perſecutions. Mrs. Jakeman, to whom ſhe communicated them, congratulated Emily on the returning moderation and good ſenſe of the ſquire, and herſelf on her prudence in having urged the young lady to this happy expoſtulation. But their mutual felicitations laſted not long. Mr. Tyrrel informed Mrs. Jakeman of the neceſſity in which he found himſelf of ſending her to a diſtance upon a buſineſs which would not fail to detain her ſeveral weeks; and, though the errand by no means wore an artificial or ambiguous face, the two friends drew a melancholy preſage from this ill-timed ſeparation. Mrs. Jakeman in the mean time exhorted her ward to perſevere, reminded her of the compunction which had already been manifeſted by her kinſman, and encouraged her to hope every thing from her courage and good temper. Emily on her part, though grieved at the abſence of her protector and counſellor at ſo intereſting a criſis, was unable to ſuſpect Mr. Tyrrel of ſuch a degree either of malice or duplicity as could afford ground for ſerious alarm. She congratulated herſelf upon her delivery from ſo alarming a perſecution, and drew a prognoſtic of future ſucceſs from this happy termination of the firſt ſerious affair of her life. She exchanged a ſtate of fortitude and alarm for her former pleaſing dreams reſpecting Mr. Falkland. Theſe ſhe bore without impatience. She was even taught by the uncertainty of the event to deſire to prolong rather than abridge a ſituation, which might be deluſive, but was not without its pleaſures.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

NOTHING could be farther from Mr. Tyrrel's intention than to ſuffer his project to be thus terminated. No ſooner was he wholly freed from the fear of his houſekeeper's interference, than he changed the whole ſyſtem of his conduct. He ordered Miſs Melvile to be cloſely confined to her own apartment, and deprived of all the means of communicating her ſituation to any one out of his own houſe. He placed over her a female ſervant in whoſe diſcretion he could confide, and who, having formerly been honoured with ſome amorous notices from the ſquire, conſidered the diſtinctions that were paid to Emily at Tyrrel Place as an uſurpation upon her more reaſonable claims. The ſquire himſelf did every thing in his power to blaſt the young lady's reputation, and repreſented to his attendants all theſe precautions as neceſſary, to prevent her from eloping to his neighbour, and plunging herſelf in total ruin.

As ſoon as Miſs Melvile had been twenty-four hours in durance, and there was ſome reaſon to ſuppoſe that her ſpirit might be ſubdued to the emergency of her ſituation, Mr. Tyrrel thought proper to go to her, to explain the grounds of her preſent treatment, and acquaint her with the only means by which ſhe could hope for any change. Emily no ſooner ſaw him, than ſhe turned towards him with an air of greater firmneſs than perhaps ſhe had ever aſſumed in her life, and accoſted him thus:

Well,

Well, ſir, is it you? I wanted to ſee you. It ſeems I am ſhut up here by your orders? What does this mean? What right have you to make a priſoner of me? What do I owe you? Your mother left me a hundred pounds: have you ever offered to make any addition to my fortune? But, if you had, I do not want it. I do not pretend to be better than the children of other poor parents; I can maintain myſelf as they do. I prefer liberty to wealth. I ſee you are ſurpriſed at the reſolution I exert. But ought I not to turn again, when I am trampled upon? I ſhould have left you before now, if Mrs. Jakeman had not overperſuaded me, and if I had not thought better of you than by your preſent behaviour I find you deſerve. But now, ſir, I intend to leave your houſe this moment, and I inſiſt upon it that you do not endeavour to prevent me.

Thus ſaying, ſhe aroſe, and went towards the door, while Mr. Tyrrel ſtood thunderſtruck at her magnanimity. Seeing however that ſhe was upon the point of being out of the reach of his power, he recovered himſelf, and pulled her back.

What is in the wind now? Do you think, you naſty ſtrumpet, that you ſhall get the better of me by ſheer impudence? Sit down! reſt you ſatisfied!—So you want to know by what right you are here, do you? By the right of poſſeſſion. This houſe is mine, and you are in my power. There is no Mrs. Jakeman now to ſpirit you away; no, nor no Mr. Falkland to bully for you. Damn me, I have countermined you, and blown up all your ſchemes. Do you think I want any other right, to puniſh an audacious rebel like you? Do you think I will be contradicted and oppoſed for nothing? When did you ever know any body reſiſt my will without being made to repent? And ſhall I now ſee myſelf brow-beaten by a chitty-faced girl? I

am

am not come to that neither.—I have not given you a fortune? Damn you, who brought you up? I will make you a bill for clothing and lodging. Do not you know that every creditor has a right to ſtop his runaway debtor? You may think as you pleaſe; but here you are till you marry Grimes. Heaven and earth ſhall not prevent but I will get the better of your obſtinacy yet.

Ungenerous, unmerciful man! and ſo it is enough for you that I have nobody to defend me! But I am not ſo helpleſs as you may imagine. You may impriſon my body, but you cannot conquer my mind. Marry Mr. Grimes! And is this the way to bring me to your purpoſe? Every hardſhip I ſuffer puts ſtill farther diſtant the end for which I am thus unjuſtly treated. You are not uſed to have your will contradicted! When did I ever contradict it? And in an affair that is ſo completely my own concern ſhall my will go for nothing? Are you not aſhamed of laying down this rule for yourſelf, and ſuffering no other creature to take the benefit of it? I want nothing of you; how dare you refuſe me the privilege of a reaſonable being, and deny me to live unmoleſted in poverty and innocence? What ſort of man do you ſhow yourſelf in this caſe, you who lay claim to the reſpect and applauſe of every one that knows you?

The ſpirited reproaches of Emily had at firſt the effect to fill Mr. Tyrrel with aſtoniſhment, and make him feel abaſhed and overawed in the preſence of this unprotected innocent. But his confuſion was the reſult of ſurpriſe. When the firſt emotion wore off, his habitual paſſion returned. He curſed himſelf for an aſs in being moved by her expoſtulations, and was ten times more exaſperated againſt Emily for daring to talk to him in this provoking language, at a time when ſhe had every thing to fear from his power. His deſpotic

and

and unforgiving propenſities were ſtimulated to a degree little ſhort of madneſs. At the ſame time his manners, which were gloomy and thoughtful, led him to meditate a variety of ſchemes for the puniſhment of her obſtinacy. He began to ſuſpect that there was little hope of ſucceeding by open force; he therefore determined to have recourſe to treachery.

He found in Grimes an inſtrument ſufficiently adapted to his purpoſe. This fellow, who would not perhaps intentionally have hurt a worm, was fitted by the mere coarſeneſs of his perceptions for the perpetration of the greateſt injuries. He regarded both injury and advantage merely as they related to the gratifications of appetite; and conſidered it as an eſſential part of true wiſdom to treat with contempt the effeminacy of thoſe who ſuffer themſelves to be tormented with ideal misfortunes. He conceived that no happier deſtiny could befal a young woman than to be his wife, and believed that that termination would be an ample compenſation for any calamities ſhe might ſuppoſe herſelf to undergo in the interval. He was therefore eaſily prevailed upon by certain temptations which Mr. Tyrrel knew how to employ, to take a part in the plot into which Miſs Melvile was meant to be betrayed.

Matters being thus prepared, Mr. Tyrrel proceeded through the means of the jailor, (for the experience he had already had of perſonal diſcuſſion did not incline him to repeat his viſits) to play upon the fears of his priſoner. This woman, ſometimes under pretence of friendſhip, and ſometimes with open malice, informed Emily from time to time of the preparations that were making for conſummating her fate. One day the ſquire had rode over to look at a neat little farm which was deſtined for the habitation of the new-married cou-

ple, and at another a quantity of live ſtock and houſhold furniture was procured that every thing might be ready for their reception. She then told her of a licence that was bought, a parſon in readineſs, and a day fixed for the nuptials. When Emily endeavoured, though with increaſing miſgivings, to ridicule theſe proceedings as abſolutely nugatory without her conſent, her artful gouvernante told her various ſtories of forced marriages, and aſſured her that neither proteſtations, nor ſilence, nor fainting would be of any avail, either to ſuſpend the ceremony, or to ſet it aſide when once performed.

The ſituation of Miſs Melvile was in an eminent degree pitiable. She had no intercourſe but with her perſecutors. She had not a human being with whom to conſult, and who might afford her the ſmalleſt degree of conſolation and encouragement. She had courage; but it was neither confirmed nor directed by the dictates of experience. It could not therefore be expected to be ſo inflexible as with better information it would no doubt have been found. She had a clear and noble ſpirit; but ſhe had ſome of her ſex's errors. Her mind ſunk under the uniform terrors with which ſhe was aſſailed, and her health became viſibly impaired.

Her firmneſs being thus far undermined, Grimes, in purſuance of his inſtructions, took care in his next interview to throw out an inſinuation, that for his own part he never cared much for the match, and, ſince ſhe was ſo averſe to it, would be very well contented that it ſhould never take place. Emily was rejoiced to find her admirer in ſo favourable a diſpoſition; and earneſtly preſſed him to give effect to this humane declaration. Her repreſentations to him on this ſubject were full of eloquence and energy. Grimes appeared to be moved at the fervency of her manner; but objected the reſentment

reſentment of Mr. Tyrrel and his landlord, who would infallibly ruin him upon the leaſt appearance of backwardneſs on his part, as poor Hawkins had been ruined before. At length however he ſuggeſted a project in conſequence of which he might aſſiſt her in her eſcape, without its ever coming to their knowledge, as indeed there was no likelihood their ſuſpicions in this caſe would fix upon him. To be ſure, ſaid he, you have refuſed me in a diſdainful ſort of a way, as a man may ſay. Mayhap you thought I was no better than a brute. But I bear you no malice, and I will ſhow you that I am more kind-hearted than you have been willing to believe. It is a ſtrange ſort of a vagary you have taken, to ſtand in your own light, and diſoblige all your friends. But, if you are reſolute to be off, do you ſee, I ſcorn to be the huſband of a laſs that is not every bit as willing as I; and ſo I will even help to put you in a condition to be free and follow your own inclinations.

Emily liſtened to theſe ſuggeſtions at firſt with eagerneſs and approbation. But her fervency was ſomewhat abated, when they came to diſcuſs the minute parts of the undertaking. It was neceſſary, as Grimes informed her, that her eſcape ſhould be effected in the dead of the night. He would conceal himſelf for that purpoſe in the garden, and be provided with falſe keys by which to deliver her from her priſon. Theſe circumſtances were by no means adapted to calm her perturbed imagination. To throw herſelf into the arms of the man, whoſe intercourſe ſhe was employing every method to avoid, and whom under the idea of a partner for life ſhe could leaſt of all men endure, was no doubt an extraordinary proceeding. The attendant circumſtances of darkneſs and ſolitude aggravated the picture. The ſituation of Tyrrel Place was uncommonly lonely: it was three miles

from the neareſt village, and no leſs than ſeven miles from that in which Mrs. Jakeman's ſiſter reſided, into whoſe protection Miſs Melvile was deſirous of throwing herſelf. The ingenuous character of Emily did not allow her to ſuſpect Grimes of intending to make an ungenerous and brutal advantage of theſe circumſtances; but her mind involuntarily revolted againſt the idea of committing herſelf alone to the diſpoſal of a man whom ſhe had lately been accuſtomed to conſider as the inſtrument of her treacherous relation.

After having for ſome time revolved theſe conſiderations, ſhe thought of the expedient of deſiring Grimes to engage Mrs. Jakeman's ſiſter to wait for her at the outſide of the garden. But this Grimes peremptorily refuſed. He even flew into a paſſion at the propoſal. It ſhowed very little gratitude, to deſire him to diſcloſe to other people his concern in this dangerous affair. For his part he was determined in conſideration of his own ſafety never to appear in it to any living ſoul. If Miſs did not believe him, when he made this propoſal out of pure good nature, and would not truſt him a ſingle inch, ſhe might even ſee to the conſequences herſelf. He was reſolved to condeſcend no farther to the whims of a perſon who in her treatment of him had ſhown herſelf as proud as Lucifer himſelf.

Emily exerted herſelf to appeaſe his reſentment; but all the eloquence of her new confederate could not prevail upon her inſtantly to give up her objection. She deſired till the next day to conſider of it. The day after was fixed by Mr. Tyrrel for the marriage ceremony. In the mean time ſhe was peſtered with intimations in a thouſand different forms of the fate that ſo nearly awaited her. The preparations were ſo continued, methodical and regular, as to produce in her the moſt painful

and aching anxiety. If her heart attained a moment's intermiſſion upon the ſubject, her female attendant was ſure by ſome ſly hint or ſarcaſtical remark to put a ſpeedy termination to her tranquillity. She felt herſelf, as ſhe afterwards remarked, alone, uninſtructed, juſt broken looſe as it were from the trammels of infancy, without one ſingle creature to concern himſelf in her fate. She, who till then had never known an enemy, had now for three weeks not ſeen the glimpſe of a human countenance that ſhe had not good reaſon to conſider as wholly eſtranged to her. She now for the firſt time experienced the anguiſh of never having known her parents, and being caſt entirely upon the charity of people with whom ſhe had too little equality to hope to receive from them the dues of friendſhip.

The ſucceeding night was filled with the moſt anxious thoughts. When a momentary oblivion ſtole upon her ſenſes, her diſtempered imagination conjured up a thouſand images of violence and falſhood, ſhe ſaw herſelf in the hands of her determined enemies, who did not heſitate by the moſt unintermitted treachery to complete her ruin. Her waking thoughts were not more conſoling. The ſtruggle was too great for her conſtitution. As morning approached, ſhe reſolved at all hazards to put herſelf into the hands of Grimes. This determination was no ſooner made, than ſhe felt her heart ſenſibly lightened. She could not conceive of any purpoſes of injuſtice that might not be perpetrated by him with even more ſecurity at preſent than under any change of her ſituation.

When ſhe communicated her determination to Grimes, it was not poſſible to ſay whether he received pleaſure or pain from the intimation. He ſmiled indeed, but his ſmile was accompanied by a certain abrupt ruggedneſs of countenance, ſo that it

it might equally well be the ſmile of ſarcaſm or of congratulation. He however renewed his aſſurance of fidelity to his engagements and punctuality of execution. Meanwhile the day was interſperſed with nuptial preſents and preparations, all indicating the firmneſs as well as ſecurity of the directors of the ſcene. Emily had hoped that, as the criſis approached, they might have remitted ſomething of their uſual diligence. She was reſolved in that caſe, if a fair opportunity had offered, to give the ſlip both to her jailors, and to her new and half truſted confederate. But, though extremely vigilant for that purpoſe, ſhe found the execution of this idea impracticable.

At length the night ſo critical to her happineſs approached. The mind of Emily could not fail on this occaſion to be extremely agitated. She had firſt exerted all her perſpicacity to elude the vigilance of her attendant. This inſolent and unfeeling tyrant, inſtead of any relentings, had only ſought to make ſport of her anxiety. Accordingly in one inſtance ſhe hid herſelf, and, ſuffering Emily to ſuppoſe that the coaſt was clear, met her at the end of the gallery, near the top of the ſtaircaſe. How do you do, my dear? ſaid ſhe, with an inſulting tone. And ſo the little dear thought itſelf cunning enough to outwit me, did it? Oh, it was a ſly little gipſey! Go, go back, love; troop! Emily felt deeply the trick that was played upon her. She ſighed, but diſdained to return any anſwer to this low vulgarity. Being once more in her chamber, ſhe ſat down in a chair, and remained buried in reverie for more than two hours. After this ſhe went to her drawers, and turned over in a hurrying, confuſed way her linen and clothes, having in her mind the proviſion it would be neceſſary to make for her elopement. Her jailor officiouſly followed her from place to place,

and

and obſerved what ſhe did for the preſent in ſilence. It was now the hour of reſt. Good night, child, ſaid this ſaucy girl, in the act of retiring. It is time to lock up. For the few next hours the time is your own. Make the beſt uſe of it! Do'ee think you can creep out at the key hole, lovey? At eight o'clock you ſee me again. And then, and then, added ſhe, clapping her hands, it is all over. The ſun is not ſurer to riſe, than you and your honeſt man to be made one.

There was ſomething in the tone with which this ſlut uttered her farewel, that for a moment ſuggeſted the queſtion to Emily, What does ſhe mean? Is it poſſible ſhe ſhould know what has been planned for the few next hours? If ſhe do, what will become of me then? But ſurely her manner of ſpeaking was very unlike that of detection and reprimand!—With an aching heart ſhe folded up the few neceſſaries ſhe thought proper to take with her. She then liſtened with an anxiety that would almoſt have enabled her to hear the ſtirring of a leaf. From time to time ſhe thought her ear was ſtruck with the ſound of feet; but the treading, if treading it were, was ſo ſoft, that ſhe could never aſcertain whether it were a real ſound or the mere creature of the fancy. Then all was ſtill as if the univerſal motion had been at reſt. By and by ſhe conceived ſhe overheard a noiſe as of buzzing and low muttered ſpeech. Her heart palpitated; ſhe ſaid, Am I betrayed? Am I the dupe of baſe artifice and deceit? Preſently ſhe heard the ſound of a key in her chamber door, and Grimes made his appearance. She ſtarted, and cried, Are we diſcovered? did not I hear you ſpeak? Grimes advanced on tiptoe with his finger to his lip. No, no, replied he, all is ſafe! He took her by the hand, led her in ſilence out of the houſe, and then acroſs the garden. Emily examined

amined with her eye the doors and paſſages as they proceeded, looked on all ſides with fearful ſuſpicion, but every thing was as ſhe herſelf could have wiſhed. Grimes opened a back door of the garden already unlocked, that led into an unfrequented lane. There ſtood two horſes ready equipped for the journey, their bridles hung to a poſt not ſix yards diſtant from the garden. Grimes puſhed the door after them. By Gemini, ſaid he, my heart was in my mouth. As I comed along, I ſaw Mun, coachey, pop along from the back door to the ſtables. He was within a hop, ſtep, and jump of me. But he had a lanthorn in his hand, and he did not ſee me, being as I was darkling.—Saying thus, he aſſiſted Miſs Melvile to mount. He troubled her little during the route. On the contrary, he was remarkably ſilent and contemplative, a circumſtance by no means diſagreeable to Emily, to whom his converſation had never been acceptable.

After having proceeded about two miles, they turned into a wood, through which the road lay that led to the place of their deſtination. The night was extremely dark, at the ſame time that the air was ſoft and mild, it being now the middle of ſummer. Under pretence of exploring the way, Grimes contrived, when they had already penetrated into the midſt of this gloomy ſolitude, to get his horſe abreaſt with that of Miſs Melvile, and then ſuddenly reaching out his hand, to ſeize hold of her bridle. I think we may as well ſtop here a bit, ſaid he.

Stop, exclaimed Emily with ſurpriſe. Why ſhould we ſtop? Mr. Grimes, what do you mean?

Come, come, ſaid he, never trouble yourſelf to wonder. Did you think I was ſuch a gooſe, as to take all this trouble merely to gratify your whim? I' faith, nobody ſhall find me a pack-horſe, to go

of

of other folks' errands, without knowing a reaſon why. I cannot ſay that I much minded to have you at firſt; but your ways are enough to ſtir the blood of my grandad. Far fetched and dear bought is always reliſhing. Your conſent was ſo hard to gain, that ſquire thought it was ſureſt aſking in the dark. A' ſaid however a' would have no ſuch doings in his houſe, and ſo, do you ſee? we are comed here.

For God's ſake, Mr. Grimes, think what you are about! You cannot be baſe enough to ruin a poor creature who has put herſelf under your protection!

That is all bother. Ruin! no, no, I will make an honeſt woman of you, when all is done. Nay, none of your airs; no tricks upon travellers! I have you here as ſafe as a horſe in a pound; there is not a houſe nor a ſhed within a mile of us; and, if I miſs the opportunity, you ſhall call me ſpade. Faith, you are a delicate morſel, and there is no time to be loſt!

Miſs Melvile had but an inſtant in which to collect her thoughts. She felt that there was but little hope of ſoftening the obſtinate and inſenſible brute in whoſe power ſhe was placed. But the preſence of mind and intrepidity, ſo peculiar to her character, did not now deſert her. Grimes had ſcarcely finiſhed his harangue, when with a ſtrong and unexpected jerk ſhe diſengaged the bridle from his graſp, and at the ſame time put her horſe upon full ſpeed. She had ſcarcely advanced twice the length of her horſe, when Grimes recovered from his ſurpriſe, and purſued her, inexpreſſibly mortified at being ſo eaſily overreached. The ſound of his horſe behind ſerved but to rouſe more completely the mettle of that of Emily; whether by accident or ſagacity the animal purſued

without a fault the narrow and winding way; and the chace continued the whole length of the wood.

At the extremity of this wood there was a gate. The recollection of this ſoftened a little the cutting diſappointment of Grimes, as he thought himſelf ſecure of putting an end by its aſſiſtance to the career of Emily, nor was it very probable that they ſhould find any body to interrupt him there in the dead and ſilence of the night. By the moſt extraordinary accident however they found a man on horſeback in wait at this gate. Help, help! exclaimed the affrighted Emily! thieves! murder! help! The man was Mr. Falkland. Grimes knew his voice, and therefore, though he attempted a ſort of ſullen reſiſtance, it was feebly made. Two other men, whom by reaſon of the darkneſs he had not at firſt ſeen, and who were Mr. Falkland's ſervants, hearing the buſtle of the rencounter, and alarmed for the ſafety of their maſter, rode up; and then Grimes, diſappointed at the loſs of his gratification, and admoniſhed by conſcious guilt, ſhrunk from farther parley and rode off in ſilence.

It may ſeem ſtrange that Mr. Falkland ſhould thus a ſecond time have been the ſaviour of Miſs Melvile, and that under circumſtances the moſt unexpected and ſingular. But in this inſtance it is very eaſily to be accounted for. He had heard of a man who lurked about this wood for robbery or ſome other bad deſign, and that it was conjectured this man was Hawkins. Mr. Falkland's compaſſion had already been ſtrongly intereſted in behalf of this victim of rural tyranny; he had in vain endeavoured to find him, and do him good; and he eaſily conceived that, if the conjecture which had been made in this inſtance proved true, he might have it in his power not only to do what he had always intended, but farther to ſave from a perilous offence againſt the laws and ſociety a man who

appeared

appeared to have ſtrongly imbibed the principles of juſtice and virtue. He took with him two ſervants, becauſe, going with the expreſs deſign of encountering robbers, if robbers ſhould be found, he believed he ſhould be inexcuſable if he did not go provided againſt poſſible accidents. But he had directed them, at the ſame time that they kept within call, to be out of the reach of being ſeen; and it was only the eagerneſs of their zeal that had brought them up thus early in the preſent encounter. Mr. Falkland had a little before had the opportunity to convince himſelf that the village conjecture in relation to Hawkins was untrue; and was now upon the point of returning home, with no other ſatisfaction than that of having intended an act of benevolence, when Grimes and Emily came up to the ſpot upon which he had poſted himſelf.

This new adventure promiſed ſomething extraordinary. Mr. Falkland did not immediately recogniſe Miſs Melvile, and the perſon of Grimes was that of a total ſtranger whom he did not recollect to have ever ſeen. But it was eaſy to underſtand the merits of the caſe, and the propriety of interfering. The reſolute manner of Mr. Falkland, combined with the dread which Grimes, oppreſſed with a ſenſe of wrong, entertained of the oppoſition of ſo elevated a perſonage, ſpeedily put the raviſher to flight. Emily was left alone with her deliverer. He found her much more collected and calm than could reaſonably have been expected from a perſon who had been a moment before in the moſt alarming ſituation. She told him of the place to which ſhe deſired to be conveyed, and he immediately undertook to eſcort her. As they went along, ſhe recovered that ſtate of mind which inclined her to make a perſon to whom ſhe had ſuch repeated obligations, and who was ſo eminently

nently the object of her admiration, acquainted with the events that had recently befallen her. Mr. Falkland liſtened with eagerneſs and ſurpriſe. Though he had already known various inſtances of Mr. Tyrrel's mean jealouſy and unfeeling tyranny, this ſurpaſſed them all, and he could ſcarcely credit his ears while he heard the tale. His brutal neighbour ſeemed to realiſe all that had ever been told of the paſſions of fiends. Miſs Melvile was obliged to repeat in the courſe of her tale her kinſman's rude accuſation againſt her of entertaining a paſſion for Mr. Falkland; and this ſhe did with the moſt bewitching ſimplicity and charming confuſion. Though this part of the tale was a ſource of real pain to her deliverer, yet it is not to be ſuppoſed but that the flattering partiality of this unhappy girl increaſed the intereſt he felt in her welfare and the indignation he conceived againſt her infernal kinſman.

They arrived without accident at the houſe of the good lady under whoſe protection Emily deſired to place herſelf. Here Mr. Falkland willingly left her as in a place of ſecurity. Such conſpiracies as that of which ſhe was intended to have been the victim, depend for their ſucceſs upon the perſon againſt whom they are formed being out of the reach of help, and the moment they are detected they are annihilated. Such reaſoning will no doubt be generally found ſufficiently ſolid, and it appeared to Mr. Falkland perfectly applicable to the preſent caſe. But he was miſtaken.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

MR. TYRREL heard with aſtoniſhment of the miſcarriage of an expedient, of the ſucceſs of which he had not previouſly entertained the ſlighteſt ſuſpicion. He became frantic with vexation. Grimes had not dared to ſignify the event of his expedition in perſon, and the footman whom he deſired to announce to his maſter that Miſs Melvile was loſt, the moment after fled from his preſence with the moſt dreadful apprehenſions. Preſently he bellowed for Grimes, and the young man at laſt appeared before him, more dead than alive. Grimes he compelled to repeat the particulars of the tale, which he had no ſooner done than he once again ſlunk away, ſhocked at the execrations with which Mr. Tyrrel overwhelmed him. Grimes was no coward; but he reverenced the inborn divinity that attends upon rank, as Indians worſhip the devil. Nor was this all. The rage of Mr. Tyrrel was ſo ungovernable and fierce, that few hearts could have been found ſo ſtout as not to have trembled before it with a ſort of unconquerable inferiority.

He no ſooner obtained a moment's pauſe than he began to recal to his tempeſtuous mind the various circumſtances of the caſe. His complaints were bitter; and in a tranquil obſerver might have produced the united feeling of pity for his ſufferings and horror at his depravity. He recollected all the precautions he had uſed; he could ſcarcely find a flaw in the proceſs; and he curſed that blind and malicious power that delighted to croſs his moſt deep laid deſigns. Of this malice he was beyond

beyond all other human beings the object. He was mocked with the ſhadow of power; and, when he lifted his hand to ſmite, it was ſtruck with ſudden palſy. To what purpoſe had heaven given him a feeling of injury and an inſtinct to reſent, while he could in no caſe make his reſentment felt! It was only neceſſary for him to be the enemy of any perſon, in order to that perſon's being inſured againſt the reach of misfortune. What inſults, the moſt ſhocking and repeated, had he not received from this paltry girl? And by whom was ſhe now torn from his indignation? By that devil that haunted him at every moment, that croſſed him at every ſtep, that fixed at pleaſure his arrows in his heart, and made mows and mockery at his inſufferable tortures.

There was one other reflexion that increaſed his anguiſh, and made him careleſs and deſperate as to his future conduct. It was in vain to conceal from himſelf that his reputation would be cruelly wounded by this event. He had imagined that, while Emily was forced into this odious marriage, ſhe would be obliged by decorum, as ſoon as the event was decided, to draw a veil over the compulſion ſhe had ſuffered. But this ſecurity was now loſt, and Mr. Falkland would take a pride in publiſhing his diſhonour. Though the provocations he had received from Miſs Melvile would in his opinion have juſtified him in any treatment he ſhould have thought proper to inflict, he was ſenſible the world would ſee the matter in a very different light. This reflection augmented the violence of his reſolutions, and determined him to refuſe no means by which he could transfer the anguiſh that now preyed upon his own mind to that of another.

Meanwhile the compoſure and magnanimity of Emily had conſiderably ſubſided, the moment ſhe believed

believed herſelf in a place of ſafety. While danger and injuſtice aſſailed her with their menaces, ſhe found in herſelf a courage that diſdained to yield. The ſucceeding appearance of calm was more fatal to her. There was nothing now powerfully to foſter her courage, or excite her energy. She looked back at the trials ſhe had paſſed, and her ſoul ſickened at the recollection of that which, while it was in act, ſhe had had the fortitude to endure. Till the period at which Mr. Tyrrel had been inſpired with this cruel antipathy, ſhe had been in all inſtances a ſtranger to anxiety and fear. Uninured to misfortune, ſhe had ſuddenly and without preparation been made the ſubject of the moſt infernal malignity. When a man of robuſt and vigorous conſtitution has a fit of ſickneſs, it produces a much more powerful effect than the ſame indiſpoſition upon a delicate valetudinarian. Such was the caſe with Miſs Melvile. She paſſed the ſucceeding night ſleepleſs and uneaſy, and was found in the morning with a high fever. Her diſtemper reſiſted for the preſent all attempts to aſſuage it, though there was reaſon to hope that the goodneſs of her conſtitution, aſſiſted by tranquillity and the kindneſs of thoſe about her, would ultimately ſurmount it. On the ſecond day ſhe was delirious. On the night of that day ſhe was arreſted at the ſuit of Mr. Tyrrel for a debt contracted for board and neceſſaries for the fourteen laſt years.

The idea of this arreſt, as the reader will perhaps recollect, firſt occurred in the converſation between Mr. Tyrrel and Miſs Melvile ſoon after he had thought proper to confine her to her chamber. But at that time he had probably had no ſerious conception of ever being induced to carry it into execution. It had merely been mentioned by way of threat, and as the ſuggeſtion of a mind whoſe habits

habits had been long familiariſed to the recollection of every poſſible medium of tyranny and revenge. But now that the unlooked-for reſcue and eſcape of his poor kinſwoman had wrought up the thoughts of Mr. Tyrrel to a degree of inſanity, and he revolved in the gloomy reſources of his mind how he might moſt effectually ſhake off the load of diſappointment that oppreſſed him, the idea recurred with double force. He was not long in forming his reſolution; and, calling for Barnes, his ſteward, immediately gave him directions in what manner to proceed.

Barnes had been for ſeveral years the inſtrument of Mr. Tyrrel's injuſtice. His mind was hardened by uſe, and he could without remorſe officiate as the ſpectator, or even as the immediate author and director of a ſcene of vulgar diſtreſs. But even he was ſomewhat ſtartled upon the preſent occaſion. The character and conduct of Emily in Mr. Tyrrel's family had been without a blot. She had not a ſingle enemy; and it was impoſſible to contemplate her youth, her harmleſs vivacity, her guileleſs innocence, without emotions of ſympathy and compaſſion.

Your worſhip?—I do not underſtand you!—Arreſt miſs!—miſs Emily!

Yes, I tell you! What is the matter with you? Go immediately to Swineard, the lawyer, and bid him finiſh the buſineſs out of hand!

Lord love your honour! Arreſt her! Why, ſhe does not owe you a braſs farthing; ſhe always lived upon your charity!

Aſs! Scoundrel! I tell you ſhe does owe me, owes me—eleven hundred pound.—The law juſtifies it.—What do you think laws were made for?—I do nothing but right, and my rights I will have.

Your

Your honour, I never queſtioned your orders in my life; but I muſt now. I cannot ſee you ruin miſs Emily, poor girl! nay, and yourſelf too, for the matter of that, and not ſay which way you are going. I hope you will bear with me. Why if ſhe owed you ever ſo much, ſhe cannot be arreſted. She is not of age.

Will you have done, ſir? Do not tell me of It cannot, and It can. To my knowledge it has been done before, and it ſhall be done again. Let him diſpute it that dares. I will do it now, and ſtand to it afterwards. Tell Swineard, if he make the leaſt boggling, it is as much as his life is worth; he ſhall ſtarve by inches.

Pray, your honour, think better of it. Upon my life, the whole country will cry ſhame of it.

Barnes?——What do you mean? I am not uſed to be talked to, and I will not bear it!—They have driven me already with their parleying and their diſobedience to the very end of my patience. You have been a good fellow to me upon many occaſions. But, if I find you out for making one with them that diſpute my authority, damn my ſoul, if I do not make you ſick of your very life!

I have done, your honour. I will not ſay another word, except this. I have heard as how that miſs Emily is ſick a-bed. You are determined, you ſay, to put her in jail. You do not mean to kill her, I take it.

Let her die, if ſhe will! I will not ſpare her for an hour. I will not always be inſulted. She had no conſideration for me, and I have no mercy for her. I am in for it! They have provoked me paſt all bearing, and they ſhall feel me! Tell Swineard, in bed or up, day or night, I will not have him hear of a minute's delay.

Such

Such were the directions of Mr. Tyrrel, and in ſtrict conformity to his directions were the proceedings of that reſpectable limb of the law he employed upon the preſent occaſion. Miſs Melvile had been delirious through a conſiderable part of the day on the evening of which the bailiff and his follower arrived. By the direction of the phyſician whom Mr. Falkland had ordered to attend her, a compoſing draught was adminiſtered; and, exhauſted as ſhe was by the wild and diſtracted images that for ſeveral hours had haunted her fancy, ſhe was now ſunk into a refreſhing ſlumber. Mrs. Hammond, the ſiſter of Mrs. Jakeman, was ſitting by her bed-ſide, full of compaſſion for the lovely ſufferer, and rejoicing in the calm tranquillity that had juſt taken poſſeſſion of her, when a little girl, the only child of Mrs. Hammond, opened the ſtreet-door to the tap of the bailiff. He ſaid he wanted to ſpeak with miſs Melvile, and the child anſwered that ſhe would go tell her mother. So ſaying, ſhe advanced to the door of the back-room upon the ground-floor in which Emily lay; but the moment it was opened, inſtead of waiting for the appearance of the mother, the bailiff entered along with the girl.

Mrs. Hammond looked up. Who are you, ſaid ſhe? Why do you come in here? Huſh! be quiet!

I muſt ſpeak with miſs Melvile.

Indeed, but you muſt not. Tell me your buſineſs. The poor lady has been light-headed all day. She is juſt fallen aſleep, and muſt not be diſturbed.

That is no buſineſs of mine. I muſt obey orders.

Orders? Whoſe orders? What is it you mean?

At this moment Emily opened her eyes. What noiſe is that? I wiſh you would let me be quiet.

Miſs,

Miſs, I want to ſpeak with you. I have got a writ againſt you for eleven hundred pound at the ſuit of ſquire Tyrrel.

At theſe words both Mrs. Hammond and Emily were dumb. The latter was ſcarcely able to annex any meaning to the intelligence; and, though Mrs. Hammond was ſomewhat better acquainted with the ſort of language that was employed, yet in this ſtrange and unexpected connexion it was almoſt as myſterious to her, as to poor Emily herſelf.

A writ! How can ſhe be in Mr. Tyrrel's debt? A writ againſt a child!

It is no ſignification putting your queſtions to us. We only do as we are directed. There is our authority. Look at it.

Lord Almighty! exclaimed Mrs. Hammond, what does this mean? It is impoſſible Mr. Tyrrel ſhould have ſent you.

Good woman, none of your jabber to us! Cannot you read?

This is all a trick! This paper is forged! It is a vile contrivance to get the poor lady out of the hands of thoſe with whom only ſhe can be ſafe. Proceed upon it at your peril!

Reſt you content; that is exactly what we mean to do. Take it at my word, we know very well what we are about.

Why, you would not tear her from her bed? I tell you, ſhe is in a high fever; ſhe is light-headed; it would be death to remove her! You are bailiffs, are not you? You are not murderers?

The law ſays nothing about that. We have orders to take her ſick or well. We will do her no harm; except ſo far as we muſt perform our office, be it how it will.

Where would you take her? What is it you mean to do?

To the county jail. Bullock, go, order a poſt-chaiſe from the Griffin!

Stay, I ſay! Give no ſuch orders! Wait only three hours; I will ſend off a meſſenger expreſs to ſquire Falkland, and I am ſure he will ſatisfy you as to any harm that can come to you, without its being neceſſary to take the poor lady to jail.

We have particular directions againſt that. We are not at liberty to loſe a minute. Why are not you gone? Order the horſes to be put to immediately!

Emily had liſtened to the courſe of this converſation, which had ſufficiently explained to her whatever was enigmatical at the firſt appearance of the bailiffs. The painful and incredible reality that was thus preſented, effectually diſſipated the illuſions of frenzy to which ſhe had juſt been a prey. My dear madam, ſaid ſhe to Mrs. Hammond, do not haraſs yourſelf with uſeleſs efforts. I am very ſorry for all the trouble I have given you. But my misfortune is inevitable. Sir, if you will ſtep into the next room, I will dreſs myſelf, and attend you immediately.

Mrs. Hammond began to be equally aware that her ſtruggles were to no purpoſe; but ſhe could not be equally patient. At one moment ſhe raved upon the brutality of Mr. Tyrrel, whom ſhe affirmed to be a devil incarnate, and not a man. At another ſhe expoſtulated with bitter invective againſt the hard-heartedneſs of the bailiff, and exhorted him to mix ſome humanity and moderation with the diſcharge of his duty; but he was impenetrable to all ſhe could urge. In the mean while Emily yielded with the ſweeteſt reſignation to an inevitable evil. Mrs. Hammond inſiſted that at leaſt they ſhould permit her to attend her young lady in the chaiſe; and the bailiff, though the orders

ders he had received were ſo peremptory that he dared not exerciſe his diſcretion as to the execution of the writ, began to have ſome apprehenſions of danger, and was willing to admit of any precaution that was not in direct hoſtility to his functions. For the reſt he underſtood, that it was in all caſes dangerous to allow ſickneſs, or apparent unfitneſs for removal as a ſufficient cauſe to interrupt a direct proceſs, and that accordingly in all doubtful queſtions and preſumptive murders the practice of the law inclined [with a laudable partiality] to the vindication of its own officers. In addition to theſe general rules he was influenced by the poſitive injunctions and aſſurances of Swineard, and the terror which univerſally through a circle of many miles was annexed to the name of Tyrrel. Before they departed Mrs. Hammond diſpatched a meſſenger with a letter of three lines to Mr. Falkland informing him of this extraordinary event. Mr. Falkland was from home when the meſſenger arrived, and not expected to return till the ſecond day; accident ſeeming in this inſtance to favour the vengeance of Mr. Tyrrel, for he had himſelf been too much under the dominion of an uncontroulable fury to have leiſure to take a circumſtance of this ſort into his eſtimate.

The forlorn ſtate of theſe poor women, who were conducted, the one by compulſion, the other as a volunteer, to a ſcene ſo little adapted to their accommodation as that of a common jail, may eaſily be imagined. There were however a maſculine courage and impetuoſity of ſpirit in Mrs. Hammond, eminently neceſſary in the difficulties they had to encounter. She was in ſome degree fitted by a ſanguine temper and an impaſſioned ſenſe of injuſtice for the diſcharge of thoſe very offices which ſobriety and calm reflexion might preſcribe. The health of miſs Melville, as might have

have been expected, was very materially affected by the ſurpriſe and removal ſhe had undergone, at the very time when repoſe was moſt neceſſary for her preſervation. Her fever became more violent than ever; her delirium was ſtronger; and the tortures of her imagination were in ſome degree proportioned to the extreme unfavourableneſs of the ſtate in which the removal had been effected. It was highly improbable ſhe could at all recover.

In the moments of ſuſpended reaſon ſhe was perpetually calling on the name of Mr. Falkland. Mr. Falkland, ſhe ſaid, was her firſt and only love, and he ſhould be her huſband. A moment afterwards ſhe exclaimed upon him in a diſconſolate, yet reproachful tone, for his unworthy deference to the prejudices of the world. It was very cruel of him to ſhew himſelf ſo proud, and tell her that he would never conſent to marry a beggar. But, if he were proud, ſhe was determined to be proud too. He ſhould ſee that ſhe would not demean herſelf like a ſlighted maiden, and that, though he could reject her, it was not in his power to break her heart. At another time ſhe imagined ſhe ſaw Mr. Tyrrel and his engine Grimes, their hands and garments dropping with blood, and the pathetic reproaches ſhe vented againſt them might have affected a heart of ſtone. Then the figure of Falkland preſented itſelf to her diſtracted fancy, deformed with wounds and of a deadly paleneſs, and ſhe ſhrieked with agony, while ſhe exclaimed that ſuch was the general hard-heartedneſs, that no one would make the ſmalleſt exertion for his reſcue. In ſuch viciſſitudes of pain, perpetually imagining to herſelf unkindneſs, inſult, conſpiracy and murder, ſhe paſſed a conſiderable part of two days.

On the evening of the ſecond Mr. Falkland arrived, accompanied by doctor Arnold, the phyſician by whom ſhe had previouſly been attended.

The

The ſcene he was called upon to witneſs was ſuch as to be moſt exquiſitely agonizing to a man of his acute ſenſibility. The news of the arreſt had given him an inexpreſſible ſhock; he was tranſported out of himſelf at the unexampled malignity of its author. But, when he ſaw the figure of Miſs Melvile, haggard, and a warrant of death written in her countenance, a victim to the diabolical paſſions of her kinſman, the ſcene ſeemed too much to be endured. When he entered, ſhe was in the midſt of one of her fits of delirium, and immediately miſtook her viſitors for two aſſaſſins. She aſked, where they had hid her Falkland, her lord, her life, her huſband! and demanded that they ſhould reſtore to her his mangled corpſe, that ſhe might embrace him with her dying arms, breathe her laſt upon his lips, and be buried in the ſame grave. She reproached them with the ſordidneſs of their conduct in becoming the tools of her vile couſin, who had deprived her of her reaſon, and would never be contented till he had murdered her. Mr. Falkland tore himſelf away from this painful ſcene, and, leaving doctor Arnold with his patient, deſired him when he had given the neceſſary directions to follow him to his inn.

The perpetual hurry of ſpirits in which Miſs Melvile had for ſeveral days been kept by the nature of her indiſpoſition was extremely exhauſting to her; and in about an hour from the viſit of Mr. Falkland her delirium ſubſided, and left her in ſo low a ſtate as to render it difficult to perceive any marks of life. Doctor Arnold, who had before withdrawn, to ſoothe, if poſſible, the diſturbed and impatient thoughts of Mr. Falkland, was ſummoned afreſh upon this change of ſymptoms, and ſat by the bed-ſide during the remainder of the night. The ſituation of his patient was ſuch as to keep him in momentary apprehenſion of her deceaſe.

ceaſe. While Miſs Melvile lay in this feeble and exhauſted condition, Mrs. Hammond betrayed every token of the tendereſt anxiety. Her ſenſibility was habitually of the acuteſt ſort, and the qualities of Emily were ſuch as powerfully to fix her affection. She loved her like a mother, Upon the preſent occaſion every ſound, every motion made her tremble. Doctor Arnold had introduced another nurſe in conſideration of the inceſſant fatigue Mrs. Hammond had undergone; and he endeavoured by repreſentations and even by authority to compel her to quit the apartment of the patient. But ſhe was uncontroulable; and he at length found that he ſhould probably do her more injury by the violence that would be neceſſary to ſeparate her from the ſuffering innocent, than by allowing her to follow her own inclinations. Her eye was a thouſand times turned with the moſt eager curioſity upon the countenance of doctor Arnold, without her daring to breathe a queſtion reſpecting his opinion, leſt he ſhould anſwer her by a communication of the moſt fatal tidings. In the mean time ſhe liſtened with the deepeſt attention to every thing that dropped either from the phyſician or the nurſe, hoping as it were to collect from ſome oblique hint the intelligence which ſhe had not courage expreſsly to require.

Towards morning the ſtate of the patient ſeemed to take a favourable turn. She dozed for near two hours, and, when ſhe awoke, appeared perfectly calm and ſenſible. Underſtanding that Mr. Falkland had brought the phyſician to attend her, and was himſelf in the neighbourhood, ſhe requeſted to ſee him. Mr. Falkland had gone in the mean time with one of his tenants to bail the debt, and now entered the priſon to enquire whether the young lady might be ſafely removed from her preſent miſerable reſidence to a more airy and commodious

apartment.

apartment. When he appeared, the ſight of him revived in the mind of Miſs Melvile an imperfect recollection of the wanderings of her delirium. She covered her face with her hand, and betrayed the moſt expreſſive confuſion, while ſhe thanked him with her uſual unaffected ſimplicity for all the trouble he had taken. She hoped ſhe ſhould not give him much more; ſhe thought ſhe ſhould get better. It was a ſhame, ſhe ſaid, if a young and lively girl as ſhe was, could not contrive to outlive the trifling misfortunes to which ſhe had been ſubjected. But, while ſhe ſaid this, ſhe was ſtill extremely weak. She tried to aſſume a chearful countenance; but it was a faint effort, which the feeble ſtate of her frame did not ſeem ſufficient to ſupport. Mr. Falkland and the doctor joined to requeſt her to keep herſelf quiet, and to avoid for the preſent all occaſions of exertion.

Encouraged by theſe appearances, Mrs. Hammond now ventured to follow the two gentlemen out of the room in order to learn from the phyſician what hopes he entertained. Doctor Arnold acknowledged that he had found his patient at firſt in a very unfavourable ſituation, that the ſymptoms were changed for the better, and that he was not without ſome expectation of her recovery. He added however, that he could anſwer for nothing, that the next twelve hours would be exceedingly critical, but that, if ſhe did not grow worſe before morning, he would then undertake to anſwer for her life. Mrs. Hammond, who had hitherto ſeen nothing but deſpair, now became frantic with joy. She burſt into tears of tranſport, bleſſed the phyſician in the moſt emphatic and impaſſioned terms, and uttered a thouſand extravagancies. Doctor Arnold ſeized this opportunity to preſs her to give herſelf a little repoſe, to which ſhe conſented, a chamber being firſt procured for her next to

that of Miſs Melvile, and ſhe having charged the nurſe to give her notice of any alteration in the patient.

Mrs. Hammond enjoyed an uninterrupted ſleep of ſeveral hours, when towards the afternoon, ſhe was alarmed by an unuſual buſtle in the next room. She liſtened for a few moments, and then determined to go and ſee what was the occaſion of it. As ſhe opened her door for that purpoſe, ſhe met the nurſe who was coming to her. The countenance of the meſſenger told her what it was ſhe had to communicate, without the uſe of words. She hurried to the bed ſide, and found Miſs Melvile expiring. The appearances that had at firſt been ſo encouraging were but of ſhort duration. The calm of the morning proved to be only a ſort of lightning before death. In a few hours the patient grew worſe. The bloom of her countenance faded; ſhe drew her breath with difficulty; and her eyes became fixed. Doctor Arnold had come in at this period, and had immediately perceived that all was over. She was for ſome time in convulſions; but, theſe ſubſiding, ſhe addreſſed the phyſician with a compoſed, though feeble voice. She thanked him for his attention; and expreſſed the moſt lively ſenſe of her obligations to Mr. Falkland. She ſincerely forgave her couſin, and hoped he might never be viſited by too acute a recollection of his barbarity to her. She would have been contented to live; few perſons had a ſincerer reliſh of the good things of life; but ſhe was well pleaſed to die rather than have become the wife of Grimes. As Mrs. Hammond entered, ſhe turned her countenance towards her, and with an affectionate expreſſion repeated her name. Theſe were her laſt words; in leſs than two hours from that time ſhe breathed her laſt in the arms of this faithful friend.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

SUCH was the fate of Miſs Emily Melvile. Perhaps tyranny never exhibited a more painful memorial of the deteſtation in which it deſerves to be held. The idea irreſiſtibly excited in every ſpectator of the ſcene was that of regarding Mr. Tyrrel as the moſt diabolical wretch that had ever diſhonoured the human form. The very attendants upon this houſe of oppreſſion, for the ſcene was acted upon too public a ſtage not to be generally underſtood, expreſſed their aſtoniſhment and diſguſt at his unparalleled cruelty. If ſuch were the feelings of men bred to the commiſſion of injuſtice, it is eaſy to conceive what muſt have been thoſe of Mr. Falkland. His whole life had tended to cultivate in him a mind tremblingly alive to moral good and evil. Upon ſuch occaſions he was unable maturely to collect his thoughts and firmly reſolve upon the proceeding which the nature of the caſe required. His habits urged him to madneſs and ungovernable fury. He could not think of ſuch complicated depravity but with ſentiments of preternatural loathing and horror. Perhaps the agonies of the wretch broken upon the wheel, whom the very firſt ſight of that engine of torture had thrown into convulſions, did not exceed thoſe of Mr. Falkland in the preſent ſituation. He was therefore deprived for a time of all that compoſure of mind which is requiſite to enable us to act with diſcretion. It was neceſſary to guard him like a madman. The whole office of judging what was

proper to be done under the preſent circumſtances devolved upon doctor Arnold.

The doctor was a man of cool and methodical habits of acting. One of the firſt ideas that ſuggeſted itſelf to him was, that Miſs Melvile was a branch of the family of Tyrrel. He did not doubt of the willingneſs of Mr. Falkland to diſcharge every expence that might be farther incident to the melancholy remains of this unfortunate victim; but he ſuſpected that the laws of faſhion and decorum required that ſome notification of the event ſhould be made to the head of the family. His manners were formal, his temper phlegmatic, and his whole character was ſuch as to render him little ſuſceptible of thoſe impetuous impulſes which have ſo conſiderable a ſhare in the hiſtory of the maſs of mankind. Perhaps too he had an eye to his own intereſt in his profeſſion, and was reluctant to expoſe himſelf to the reſentment of a perſon of Mr. Tyrrel's conſideration in the neighbourhood. Inacceſſible to the ſympathies of the mind, he was little qualified to calculate their operation in the preſent inſtance. But, with this weakneſs, he had nevertheleſs ſome feelings in common with the reſt of the world, and muſt have ſuffered a conſiderable degree of violence before he could have perſuaded himſelf to be the meſſenger; beſide which he did not think it right in the preſent ſituation to leave Mr. Falkland.

Doctor Arnold no ſooner mentioned theſe ideas, than they ſeemed to make a ſudden impreſſion on Mrs. Hammond, and ſhe earneſtly requeſted that ſhe might be permitted to carry the intelligence. The propoſal was unexpected; but the doctor did not very obſtinately refuſe his aſſent. She was determined, ſhe ſaid, to ſee what ſort of impreſſion the cataſtrophe would make upon the author of it; and ſhe promiſed to comport herſelf with moderation and civility. The journey was ſoon performed.

I am

I am come, ſir, ſaid ſhe to Mr. Tyrrel, to inform you that your couſin, Miſs Melvile, died this afternoon.

Died! Is it poſſible? are you ſerious?

Yes, ſir. I ſaw her die. She died in my arms.

Dead! Who killed her? What do you mean?

Who killed her? Is it for you to aſk that queſtion? It was your cruelty and malice that killed her!

Me?—my?—Poh! ſhe is not dead—it cannot be—it is not a week ſince ſhe left this houſe.

Will you not believe me? I ſay ſhe is dead!

Have a care, woman! this is no jeſting matter.

No: though ſhe uſed me ill, I would not believe her dead for all the world!

Mrs. Hammond ſhook her head in token of the truth of her aſſertion.

No, no, no, no!—I will never believe that!—No, never!

Will you come with me, and convince your own eyes? It is a ſight worthy of you, and will be a feaſt to ſuch a heart as yours!—Saying this, Mrs. Hammond offered her hand, as if to conduct him to the ſpot.

Mr. Tyrrel ſhrunk back.

If ſhe be dead, what is that to me? Am I to anſwer for every thing that goes wrong in the world?—What do you come here for? Why bring your meſſages to me?

To whom ſhould I bring them, but to her kinſman,—and her murderer?

Murderer!—Did I employ knives or piſtols? Did I give her poiſon? I did nothing but what the law allows. If ſhe be dead, nobody can ſay that I am to blame!

To blame!—All the world will abhor and curſe you. Were you ſuch a fool as to think, becauſe in ſome caſes men pay reſpect to wealth and rank, that

that this excuſe would extend to ſuch a deed? They will laugh at ſo barefaced a cheat. The meaneſt beggar will ſpurn and ſpit at you. Aye, you may well ſtand confounded at what you have done. I will proclaim you to the whole world, and you will be obliged to fly the very face of a human creature!

Good woman, ſaid Mr. Tyrrel, extremely humbled, talk no more in this ſtrain!—Emmy is not dead! I am ſure—I hope—ſhe is not dead!—Tell me that you have only been deceiving me, and I will forgive you every thing.—I will forgive her—I will take her into favour—I will do any thing you pleaſe!—I never meant her any harm!

I tell you, ſir, ſhe is dead! You have murdered the ſweeteſt lady that lived! Can you bring her back to life, as you have driven her out of it? If you could, I would kneel to you twenty times a day!—What is it you have done? Miſerable wretch! did you think you could do and undo, and change the laws of nature, as you pleaſe?

If ſhe is dead,—what care I? It is no concern of mine. Did I tell her to run away? I meant every thing for her good. If ſhe took things to heart ſo, as to die of the pip like a chicken, is that my fault?

The reproaches of Mrs. Hammond were the firſt inſtance in which Mr. Tyrrel was made to drink the full cup of retribution. This was however only a ſpecimen of a long ſeries of contempt, abhorrence and inſult that was reſerved for him. The words of Mrs. Hammond were prophetic. It evidently appeared that, though wealth and hereditary elevation operate as an apology for many delinquencies, there are ſome which ſo irreſiſtibly addreſs themſelves to the indignation of mankind, that, like death, they level all diſtinctions, and reduce their perpetrator to an equality with the moſt

moſt indigent and ſqualid of his ſpecies. Againſt Mr. Tyrrel, as the tyrannical and unmanly murderer of Emily, thoſe who dared not venture the unreſerved avowal of their ſentiments, muttered curſes, deep, not loud; while the reſt joined in an univerſal cry of abhorrence and execration. He himſelf ſtood aſtoniſhed at the novelty of his ſituation. Accuſtomed as he had been to the obedience and trembling homage of mankind, he had imagined they would be perpetual, and that no exceſs on his part would ever be potent enough to break the enchantment. Now he looked round and ſaw ſullen deteſtation in every face, which with difficulty reſtrained itſelf, and upon the ſlighteſt provocation broke forth with an impetuous tide, and ſwept away all the mounds of ſubordination and fear. His large eſtate could not now purchaſe civility from the gentry, the peaſantry, ſcarcely from his own ſervants. In the indignation of all around him he found a ghoſt that haunted him with every change of place, and a remorſe that ſtung his conſcience and exterminated his peace. The neighbourhood appeared more and more every day to be growing too hot for him to endure the fierceneſs of its temperature, and it became evident that he would ultimately be obliged to quit the country. Urged by the flagitiouſneſs of this laſt example, people learned to recollect every other inſtance of Mr. Tyrrel's exceſſes, and upon the whole it was no doubt a fearful catalogue of wanton injuſtice that now roſe up in judgment againſt him. It ſeemed as if the ſenſe of public reſentment had been long gathering ſtrength unperceived, and now at length burſt forth into inextinguiſhable violence.

There was ſcarcely a human being upon whom this ſort of retribution could have ſat more uneaſily than upon Mr. Tyrrel. Though he had not a con-

a conſciouſneſs of innocence prompting him continually to recoil from the deteſtation of mankind as a thing totally unallied to his character, yet the imperiouſneſs of his temper and the conſtant experience he had had of the pliability of other men, prepared him to feel the general and undiſguiſed condemnation into which he was ſunk with uncommon emotions of anger and impatience. That he, at the beam of whoſe eye every countenance fell, and whom in the fierceneſs of his wrath no one was daring enough to anſwer, ſhould now be regarded with avowed diſlike and treated with unceremonious cenſure, was a thing he could not endure to recollect or believe. Symptoms of the univerſal diſguſt ſmote him at every inſtant, and at every blow he writhed with intolerable anguiſh. His rage was unbounded and raving. He repelled every attack with the fierceſt indignation; while the more he ſtruggled, the more deſperate his ſituation appeared to become. At length he determined to collect his ſtrength for a deciſive effort, and to meet the whole tide of public opinion in a ſingle ſcene.

In purſuance of theſe thoughts he reſolved to repair without delay to the rural aſſembly which I have already mentioned in the courſe of my hiſtory. Miſs Melvile had now been dead one month. There was a ſort of buſtle that took place at his entrance, it having been agreed by a private vote among the gentlemen of the aſſembly that Mr. Tyrrel was to be refuſed admittance, as a perſon with whom they did not chooſe to aſſociate. This vote had already been notified to him by letter by the maſter of the ceremonies, but the intelligence was rather calculated to a man of Mr. Tyrrel's diſpoſition to excite defiance than to overawe. At the door of the aſſembly he was perſonally met by the maſter of the ceremonies, who had perceived the

the arrival of an equipage, and who now endeavoured to repeat his prohibition; but he was thruſt aſide by Mr. Tyrrel with an air of native authority and ineffable contempt. As he entered, every eye was turned upon him. Preſently all the gentlemen in the room aſſembled round him. Some endeavoured to huſtle him, and others began to expoſtulate. But he found the ſecret effectually to ſilence the one ſet, and to ſhake off the other. His muſcular form, the well-known eminence of his intellectual powers, the long habits to which every man was formed of acknowledging his aſcendancy, were all in his favour. He conſidered himſelf as playing a deſperate ſtake, and had rouſed all the energies he poſſeſſed to enable him to do juſtice to ſo intereſting a tranſaction. Diſengaged from the inſects that had at firſt peſtered him, he paced up and down the room with a magiſterial ſtride, and flaſhed an angry glance on every ſide. He then broke ſilence. "If any one had any thing to ſay to him, he ſhould know where and how to anſwer him. He would adviſe any ſuch perſon however to conſider well what he was about. If any man imagined he had any thing perſonally to complain of, it was very well. But he did expect that nobody there would be ignorant and raw enough to meddle with what was no buſineſs of theirs, and intrude into the concerns of any man's private family."

This being a ſort of defiance, one and another gentleman advanced to anſwer it. He that was firſt began to ſpeak; but Mr. Tyrrel, by the expreſſion of his countenance and a peremptory tone, by well-timed interruptions and pertinent inſinuations, cauſed him firſt to heſitate, and then to be ſilent. He ſeemed to be faſt advancing to the triumph he had promiſed himſelf. The whole company were aſtoniſhed. They felt the ſame ab-

horrence and condemnation of his character; but they could not help admiring the courage and reſources he diſplayed upon the preſent occaſion. They could without difficulty have concentred afreſh their indignant feelings, but they ſeemed to want a leader.

At this critical moment Mr. Falkland entered the room. He had been abſent the laſt week in a diſtant part of the country, and was now returned two or three days ſooner than he expected. Mr. Tyrrel had willingly embraced this opportunity, truſting that, if he could now effect his reeſtabliſhment, he ſhould eaſily preſerve the ground he had regained even in the face of his moſt formidable rival. Mr. Tyrrel was certainly not deficient in courage; but he conceived that the preſent was too important an epocha in his life to allow him to make any unneceſſary riſk in his chance for future eaſe and importance. He would gladly have diſpenſed with the arrival of the new comer.

Both he and Mr. Falkland reddened at ſight of each other. Mr. Falkland advanced towards him without a moment's pauſe, and in a peremptory voice aſked him, what he did here?

Here! What do you mean by that? This place is as free to me as you, and you are the laſt perſon to whom I ſhall deign to give an account of myſelf.

Sir, the place is not free to you. Do not you know you have been voted out? Whatever were your rights, your infamous conduct has forfeited them.

Mr. what do you call yourſelf, if you have any thing to ſay to me, chooſe a proper time and place. Do not think to put on your bullying airs under ſhelter of this company! I will not endure it.

You

You are miſtaken, ſir. This public ſcene is the only place where I can have any thing to ſay to you. If you would not hear of the univerſal indignation of mankind, you muſt not come into the ſociety of men. Miſs Melvile! Shame upon you, inhuman, unrelenting tyrant! Can you hear her name, and not ſink into the earth? Can you retire into ſolitude, and not ſee her pale and patient ghoſt riſing to reproach you? Can you recollect her virtues, her innocence, her ſpotleſs manners, her unreſenting temper, and not run diſtracted with remorſe? Have you not killed her in the firſt bloom of her youth? Can you bear to think that ſhe now lies mouldering in the grave through your curſed contrivance, that deſerved a crown, ten thouſand times more than you deſerve to live? And do you expect that mankind will ever forget, or forgive ſuch a deed? Go, miſerable wretch; think yourſelf too happy that you are permitted to fly the face of man! Why, what a pitiful figure do you make at this moment! Do you think that any thing could bring ſo hardened a wretch as you are, to ſhrink from reproach, if your conſcience were not in confederacy with him that reproached you? And were you fool enough to believe that any obſtinacy however determined could enable you to deſpiſe the keen rebuke of juſtice? Go, go, ſhrink into your miſerable ſelf! Begone, and let me never be blaſted with your ſight again!

And here, however incredible it may appear, Mr. Tyrrel began to obey his imperious cenſurer. His looks were full of wildneſs and horror; his limbs trembled; and his tongue refuſed its office. He felt no power of reſiſting the impetuous torrent of reproach that was poured upon him. He heſitated; he was aſhamed of his own defeat; he ſeemed to wiſh to deny it. But his ſtruggles were ineffectual; every attempt periſhed in the moment

in

it was made. The general voice was eager to abaſh him. As his confuſion became more viſible, the outcry increaſed. It ſwelled gradually to hootings, tumult, and a deafening noiſe of indignation. At length he willingly retired from the public ſcene, unable any longer to endure the ſenſations it inflicted.

In about an hour and a half he returned. No precaution had been taken againſt this incident, for nothing could be more unexpected. In the interval he had intoxicated himſelf with large draughts of brandy. In a moment he was in a part of the room where Mr Falkland was ſtanding, and with one blow of his muſcular arm levelled him with the earth. The blow however was not ſtunning, and Mr. Falkland roſe again immediately. It is obvious to perceive how unequal he muſt have been to this ſpecies of conteſt. He was ſcarcely riſen, before Mr. Tyrrel repeated his blow. Mr. Falkland was now upon his guard, and did not fall. But the blows of his adverſary were redoubled with a rapidity difficult to conceive, and Mr. Falkland was once again brought to the earth. In this ſituation Mr. Tyrrel kicked his proſtrate enemy, and ſtooped, apparently with the intention of dragging him along the floor. All this paſſed in a moment, and the gentlemen preſent had not time to recover their ſurpriſe They now interfered, and Mr. Tyrrel once more quitted the apartment.

It is difficult to conceive of any event more terrible to the individual upon whom it fell, than the treatment which Mr. Falkland in this inſtance experienced. Every paſſion of his life was calculated to make him feel it more acutely. He had repeatedly exerted the moſt uncommon energy and prudence to prevent the miſunderſtanding between Mr. Tyrrel and himſelf from proceeding to extremities; but in vain! It was cloſed with a cataſtrophe

ſtrophe exceeding all that he had feared, or that the moſt penetrating foreſight could have ſuggeſted. To Mr. Falkland diſgrace was worſe than death. The ſlighteſt breath of diſhonour would have ſtung him to the very ſoul. What muſt it have been with this complication of ignominy, baſe, humiliating and public? Could Mr. Tyrrel have underſtood the evil he inflicted, even he under all his circumſtances of provocation could hardly have perpetrated it. Mr. Falkland's mind muſt have been full of uproar like the war of contending elements, and of ſuch ſuffering as caſts contempt on the refinements of inventive cruelty. He wiſhed no doubt for annihilation, to lie down in eternal oblivion, in an inſenſibility, which compared with what he experienced was ſcarcely leſs enviable than beatitude itſelf. Horror, deteſtation, revenge, inexpreſſible longings to ſhake off the evil, and a perſuaſion that in this caſe all effort was powerleſs, muſt have filled his ſoul even to burſting.

One other event cloſed the tranſactions of this memorable evening. Mr. Falkland was baffled of the vengeance that yet remained to him. Mr. Tyrrel was found by ſome of the company dead in the ſtreet, having been murdered at the diſtance of a few yards from the aſſembly houſe.

CHAP. XII.

I SHALL endeavour to ſtate the remainder of this narrative in the words of Mr. Collins. The reader has already had occaſion to perceive that Mr. Collins was a man of no vulgar order; and his reflections on this ſubject were uncommonly judicious.

"This day was the criſis of Mr. Falkland's hiſtory. From hence took its beginning that gloomy and unſociable melancholy of which he has ſince been the victim. No two characters can be in certain reſpects more ſtrongly contraſted, than the Mr. Falkland of a date prior and ſubſequent to theſe events. Hitherto he had been attended by a fortune perpetually proſperous. His mind was ſanguine; full of that undoubting confidence in its own powers which proſperity is qualified to produce. Though the habits of his life were thoſe of a ſerious and ſublime viſionary, they were nevertheleſs full of chearfulneſs and tranquillity. But from this moment his pride and the lofty adventurouſneſs of his ſpirit were effectually ſubdued. From an object of envy he was changed into an object of compaſſion. Life, which hitherto no one had ſo exquiſitely enjoyed, became a burthen to him. No more ſelf-complacency, no more rapture, no more ſelf-approving and heart-tranſporting benevolence! He, who had lived beyond any man upon the grand and animating reveries of the imagination, ſeemed now to have no viſions but of anguiſh and deſpair. His caſe was peculiarly worthy of ſympathy, ſince no doubt, if rectitude and purity

rity of diſpoſition could give a title to happineſs, few men could exhibit a more conſiſtent and powerful claim than Mr. Falkland.

"He was too deeply pervaded with the idle and groundleſs romances of chivalry ever to forget the ſituation, humiliating and diſhonourable according to his ideas, in which he had been placed upon this occaſion. There is a myſterious ſort of divinity annexed to the perſon of a true knight, that makes any ſpecies of brute violence committed upon it indelible and immortal. To be knocked down, cuffed, kicked, dragged along the floor! ſacred heaven, the memory of ſuch a treatment was intolerable! No future luſtration could ever remove the ſtain: and, what was perhaps ſtill worſe in the preſent caſe, the offender having ceaſed to exiſt, the luſtration which the laws of knight-errantry preſcribe was rendered impoſſible.

"In ſome future period of human improvement it is probable that that calamity will be in a manner unintelligible, which in the preſent inſtance contributed to tarniſh and wither the excellence of one of the moſt elevated and amiable of human minds. If Mr. Falkland had reflected with perfect accuracy upon the caſe, he would probably have been able to look down with indifference upon a wound which, as it was, pierced to his very vitals. How much more dignity than in the modern duelliſt do we find in Themiſtocles, the moſt gallant of the Greeks; who, when Eurybiades, his commander in chief, in anſwer to ſome of his remonſtrances, lifted his cane over him with a menacing air, accoſted him in that noble apoſtrophe, Strike, but hear?

"How would a man of true diſcernment in ſuch a caſe reply to his brutal aſſailant? "I make "it my boaſt that I can endure calamity and pain: "ſhall I not be able to endure the trifling incon-

"venience

" venience that your folly can inflict upon me?
" Perhaps a human being would be more accom-
" pliſhed, if he underſtood the ſcience of perſon-
" al defence; but how few would be the occa-
" ſions upon which he would be called to exert
" it? How few human beings would he encoun-
" ter ſo unjuſt and injurious as you, if his own
" conduct were directed by the principles of rea-
" ſon and benevolence? Beſide, how narrow
" would be the uſe of this ſcience, when acquired?
" It will ſcarcely put the man of delicate make
" and petty ſtature upon a level with the athletic
" pugiliſt; and, if it did in ſome meaſure ſecure
" me againſt the malice of a ſingle adverſary, ſtill
" my perſon and my life, ſo far as mere force is
" concerned, would always be at the mercy of
" two. Farther than immediate defence againſt
" actual violence it could never be of uſe to me.
" The man who can deliberately meet his adver-
" ſary for the purpoſe of expoſing the perſons of
" one or both of them to injury, tramples upon
" every principle of reaſon and equity. Duelling
" is the vileſt of all egotiſm, treating the public,
" which has a claim to all my powers and exer-
" tions, as if it were nothing, and myſelf, or ra-
" ther an unintelligible chimera I annex to myſelf,
" as if it were entitled to my excluſive attention.
" I am unable to cope with you: what then? Can
" that circumſtance diſhonour me? No; I can
" only be diſhonoured by perpetrating an un-
" juſt action. My honour is in my own keeping,
" beyond the reach of all mankind. Strike! I
" am paſſive. No injury that you can inflict ſhall
" provoke me to expoſe you or myſelf to unneceſ-
" ſary evil. I refuſe that; but I am not therefore
" puſillanimous: when I refuſe any danger or ſuf-
" fering by which the general good may be pro-
" moted, then brand me for a coward!"

" Theſe

"These reasonings, however simple and irresistible they must be found by a dispassionate enquirer, are little reflected on by the world at large, and were most of all uncongenial to the prejudices of Mr. Falkland. But the public disgrace and chastisement that had been imposed upon him, intolerable as they were to be recollected, were not the whole of the mischief that redounded to our unfortunate patron from the transactions of that day. It was presently whispered that he was no other than the murderer of his antagonist. This rumour was of too much importance to the very continuance of his life, to justify its being concealed from him. He heard it with inexpressible astonishment and horror; it formed a dreadful addition to the load of intellectual anguish that already oppressed him. No man had ever held his reputation so dear to him as Mr. Falkland; and now in one day he was fallen under the most exquisite calamities, a complicated personal insult, and the imputation of the foulest of crimes. He might have fled; for no one was forward to proceed against a man so adored as Mr. Falkland, or in revenge of one so universally execrated as Mr. Tyrrel. But flight he disdained. In the mean time the affair was of too serious a magnitude, the rumour unchecked seemed daily to increase in strength, and the magistrates were at length obliged to take some steps upon the subject. Without causing him to be apprehended, they sent to desire he would appear before them at one of their meetings. They investigated the particulars of the story. What could they do? The recentness of the quarrel, and the odious nature of the insult given by Mr. Tyrrel were notorious. Mr. Falkland had left the rooms immediately after his assailant; and, though he had been attended by one or two of the gentlemen to his inn, it appeared that he had left them upon some slight pretence

tence as ſoon as he arrived at it, and, when they enquired for him of the waiters, they were given to underſtand that he had mounted his horſe and rode home. In conſideration of theſe particulars the magiſtrates concluded that they could not be juſtified but in committing Mr. Falkland to priſon. His defence was manly, logical, and impreſſive. But, though they entertained the ſtrongeſt preſumption of his innocence, they conceived that they were obliged in their capacity to proceed upon the unfortunate circumſtances that appeared againſt the accuſed, and commit him for his deliverance to a trial by his country. In all this Mr. Falkland was nearly paſſive. He ſeemed to fear by too direct an appeal to judicature to render more preciſe an imputation the memory of which he deprecated, at the ſame time that he was ſufficiently willing to meet the ſevereſt ſcrutiny, and, if he could not hope to have it forgotten that he had ever been accuſed, to prove in the moſt ſatisfactory manner that the accuſation was unjuſt.

"Never in this quarter of the iſland was a court more crowded with perſons of the higheſt diſtinction than upon Mr. Falkland's trial. Never was expectation wrought to a higher pitch, or the paſſions of men more profoundly intereſted. You ſeem never to have heard of this memorable tranſaction; and indeed that is little to be wondered at, ſince the good nature of the world is intereſted in ſuppreſſing it, and it is deemed a diſgrace to a man to have held up his hand at a criminal bar, though acquitted with circumſtances the moſt ſatisfactory and honourable. It may be ſuppoſed that this ſuppreſſion is particularly acceptable to Mr. Falkland; and I ſhould not have acted in contradiction to his modes of thinking in communicating the ſtory to you, had there not been circumſtances of peculiar urgency that ſeemed to render the communication deſirable.

"The

"The facts adduced upon the trial were preciſely thoſe which had already been laid before the magiſtrates. By the nature of the caſe no particular facts could be ſtated in balance againſt theſe. As ſoon as the evidence for the crown had been gone through, Mr. Falkland immediately proceeded to his defence. Several copies of the trial were made, and Mr. Falkland ſeemed for a ſhort time to have the idea of ſending it to the preſs. I have one of theſe copies in my poſſeſſion, and I will read from it the ſpeech of the accuſed, as it was taken down in court."—Saying this, Mr. Collins roſe, and took it from a private drawer in his eſcritoire.

"My lord, and gentlemen of the jury,

"I ſtand here accuſed of a crime the moſt black that any human creature is capable of perpetrating. I am innocent. I have no fear that I ſhall fail to make every perſon in this court acknowledge my innocence. In the mean time what muſt be my feelings? Conſcious as I am of deſerving approbation and not cenſure, of having paſſed my life in acts of juſtice and philanthropy, can any thing be more deplorable than for me to ſtand here to anſwer a charge of murder? So wretched is my ſituation, that I cannot accept your gratuitous acquittal, if you ſhould be diſpoſed to beſtow it. I muſt anſwer to an imputation, the very thought of which is ten thouſand times worſe than death. I muſt exert the whole energy of my mind to prevent my being ranked with the vileſt of men.

"Gentlemen, this is a ſituation in which a man may be allowed to boaſt. Accurſed ſituation! No man need envy me the vile and polluted triumph I am now to gain! I have called no witneſſes to my character. Great God! what ſort of a character is that which muſt be ſupported by witneſſes? But, if I muſt ſpeak, look round the court, aſk of every one preſent, enquire of your own hearts!

Not

Not one word of reproach was ever whiſpered againſt my character. I do not heſitate to call upon thoſe who have known me moſt to afford me the moſt honourable teſtimony.

" My life has been ſpent in the keeneſt and moſt unintermitted ſenſibility to reputation. I am almoſt indifferent as to what ſhall be the event of this day. I would not open my mouth upon the occaſion, if my life were the only thing that was at ſtake. It is not in the power of your verdict to reſtore to me my unblemiſhed reputation, to obliterate the diſgrace I have ſuffered, or to prevent it from being remembered that I have been brought to trial upon a charge of murder. Your verdict can never have the efficacy to prevent the miſerable remains of my exiſtence from being the moſt intolerable of all burthens.

" I am accuſed of having committed murder upon the body of Barnabas Tyrrel. I would moſt joyfully have given every farthing I poſſeſs, and devoted myſelf to perpetual beggary, to have preſerved his life. His life was precious to me, beyond that of all mankind. In my opinion the greateſt injuſtice committed by his unknown aſſaſſin was that of defrauding me of my juſt revenge. I confeſs that I would have called him out to the field, and that our encounter ſhould not have been terminated but by the death of one or both of us. This would have been a pitiful and inadequate compenſation for his unparalleled inſult, but it was all that remained.

" I aſk for no pity, but I muſt openly declare that never was any misfortune ſo horrible as mine. I would willingly have taken refuge from the recollection of that night in a voluntary death. Life was now ſtripped of all thoſe recommendations for the ſake of which it was dear to me. But even this conſolation is denied me. I am compelled

pelled to drag for ever the intolerable load of exiſtence, upon penalty, if at any period however remote I ſhake it off, of having that impatience regarded as confirming a charge of murder. Gentlemen, if by your verdict you could take away my life, without that act being connected with my diſgrace, I would bleſs the cord that ſuſpended the breath of my exiſtence for ever.

"You all know how eaſily I might have fled from this purgation. If I had been guilty, ſhould I not have embraced the opportunity? But, as it was, I could not. Reputation has been the idol, the jewel of my life. I could never have borne to think that a human creature in the remoteſt part of the globe ſhould believe that I was a criminal. Alas! what a deity it is that I have choſen for my worſhip! I have entailed upon myſelf everlaſting agony and deſpair!

"I have but one word to add. Gentlemen, I charge you to do me the imperfect juſtice that your office puts in your power! My life is a worthleſs thing. But my honour, the paltry remains of honour I have now to boaſt, is in your judgment. It is little that you can do for me; but it is not leſs your duty to do that little. May that God who is the fountain of honour and good, proſper and protect you! The man who now ſtands before you is devoted to perpetual barrenneſs and blaſt! He has nothing to hope for beyond the feeble conſolation of this day!"

"You will eaſily imagine that Mr. Falkland was acquitted with every circumſtance of honour. Nothing is more to be deplored in human inſtitutions than that the forms of juſtice ſhould thus ſubject a man, of whoſe innocence every one was convinced, to a ſpecies of purgation to which the ideas of mankind have annexed a ſentiment of diſgrace. Nobody entertained the ſhadow of a doubt upon

upon the ſubject, and yet a mere incidental concurrence of circumſtances made it neceſſary that the beſt of men ſhould be publicly arraigned as if really under ſuſpicion of an atrocious crime. It may be granted indeed that Mr. Falkland had his faults, but thoſe very faults placed him at a ſtill farther diſtance from the criminality in queſtion. He was the fool of honour and fame; a man whom in the purſuit of reputation nothing could divert; who would have purchaſed the character of a true, gallant and undaunted hero at the expence of worlds, and who thought every calamity nominal but a ſtain upon his honour. How atrociouſly abſurd to ſuppoſe any motive capable of inducing ſuch a man to play the part of a lurking aſſaſſin? How unfeeling to oblige him to defend himſelf from ſuch an imputation in a court of juſtice? Did any man, and leaſt of all a man of the pureſt honour, ever paſs in a moment from a life unſtained by a ſingle act of injury to the conſummation of human depravity?

"When the verdict of the jury was given, a general murmur of applauſe and involuntary tranſport burſt forth in the court. It was at firſt low, and gradually became louder. As it was the expreſſion of rapturous delight and an emotion diſintereſted and divine, ſo there was an indeſcribable ſomething in the very ſound that carried it home to the heart, and convinced every ſpectator that no perſonal pleaſure ever exiſted that was not fooliſh and feeble in the compariſon. Every one ſtrove who ſhould moſt expreſs his eſteem of the amiable accuſed. Mr. Falkland was no ſooner withdrawn, than the gentlemen in the court crowded together to conſult how they ſhould moſt effectually expreſs their congratulation. They immediately named a deputation to wait upon him for that purpoſe. The grand jury and the petty jury drew up an addreſs

dreſs of a ſimilar nature. The very judges and counſel, though leſs acquainted with his perſonal character, were ſtrongly impreſſed with the mute and univerſal teſtimony they witneſſed in his favour, and zealouſly concurred to aſſiſt the general ſentiment. It was a ſort of ſympathetic feeling that took hold upon all ranks and degrees. The multitude received him with huzzas, they took his horſes from his carriage, dragged him in triumph, and attended him many miles in his return to his own habitation. It ſeemed as if a public trial before a criminal judge, which had hitherto been conſidered in every event as a brand of diſgrace, was converted in the preſent inſtance into an occaſion of enthuſiaſtic adoration and unexampled honour.

"But nothing could reach the heart of Mr. Falkland. He was not inſenſible to the general kindneſs and exertions; but it was too evident that the melancholy that had taken hold of his mind was invincible.

"It was only a few weeks after this memorable trial that the real murderer was diſcovered. Every part of this ſtory was extraordinary. The real murderer was Hawkins. He was found with his ſon under a feigned name at a village at about thirty miles diſtance, in want of all the neceſſaries of life. He had lived here from the period of his flight in ſo private a manner, that all the enquiries that had been ſet on foot by the benevolence of Mr. Falkland or the inſatiable malice of Mr. Tyrrel had been inſufficient to diſcover him. The firſt thing that had led to the detection was a parcel of clothes covered with blood that were found in a ditch, and which, when drawn out, were known by the people of the village to belong to this man. The murder of Mr. Tyrrel was not a circumſtance that could be unknown, and ſuſpicion

picion was immediately rouſed. A diligent ſearch being made, the ruſty handle with part of the blade of a knife was found thrown in a corner of his lodging, which being applied to a piece of the point of a knife that had been broken in the wound, appeared exactly to correſpond. Upon farther enquiry two ruſtics, who had been accidentally on the ſpot, remembered to have ſeen Hawkins and his ſon in the town that very evening, and to have called after them, and received no anſwer, though they were ſure of their perſons. Upon this accumulated evidence both Hawkins and his ſon were tried, condemned and afterwards executed. In the interval between the ſentence and execution Hawkins confeſſed his guilt with many marks of compunction; though there are perſons by whom this is denied; but I have taken ſome pains to enquire into the fact, and am perſuaded that their diſbelief is precipitate and groundleſs.

"The cruel injuſtice that this man had ſuffered from his village tyrant was not forgotten upon the preſent occaſion. It was by a ſtrange fatality that the barbarous proceedings of Mr. Tyrrel ſeemed never to fall ſhort of their completion; and even his death ſerved eventually to conſummate the ruin of a man he hated, a circumſtance, which, if it could have come to his knowledge, would perhaps have in ſome meaſure conſoled him for his untimely end. This poor Hawkins was ſurely entitled to ſome pity, ſince his being finally urged to deſperation, and brought, together with his ſon, to an ignominious fate, was originally owing to the ſturdineſs of his virtue and independence. But the compaſſion of the public was in a great meaſure ſhut againſt him, as they thought it a piece of barbarous and unpardonable ſelfiſhneſs, that he had not rather come boldly forward to meet

meet the conſequences of his own conduct, than ſuffer a man of ſo much public worth as Mr. Falkland, and who had been ſo deſirous of doing him good, to be tried for a murder that he had committed.

"From this time to the preſent Mr. Falkland has been nearly ſuch as you at preſent ſee him. Though it be ſeveral years ſince theſe tranſactions, the impreſſion they made is for ever freſh in the mind of our unfortunate patron. From thenceforward his habits became totally different. He had before been fond of public ſcenes, and acting a part in the midſt of the people among whom he immediately reſided. He now made himſelf a rigid recluſe. He had no aſſociates, no friends. Inconſolable himſelf, he yet wiſhed to treat others with kindneſs. There was a ſolemn ſadneſs in his manner, attended with the moſt perfect gentleneſs and humanity. Every body reſpects him, for his benevolence is unalterable; but there is a ſtately coldneſs and reſerve in his behaviour, which makes it difficult for thoſe about him to regard him with the familiarity of affection. Theſe ſymptoms are uninterrupted, except at certain times when his ſufferings become intolerable, and he diſplays the marks of a furious inſanity. At thoſe times his language is fearful and myſterious, and he ſeems to figure to himſelf by turns every ſort of perſecution and alarm which may be ſuppoſed to attend upon an accuſation of murder. But, ſenſible of his own weakneſs, he is anxious at ſuch times to withdraw into ſolitude; and his domeſtics in general know nothing of him but the uncommunicative and haughty, yet mild dejection that accompanies every thing he does."

CHAP. XIII.

I HAVE ſtated the narrative of Mr. Collins, interſperſed with ſuch other information as I was able to collect, with all the exactneſs that my memory, aſſiſted by certain memorandums I made at the time, will afford. I do not pretend to warrant the authenticity of any part of theſe memoirs except ſo much as fell under my own knowledge, and that part ſhall be ſtated with the ſame ſimplicity and accuracy that I would obſerve towards a court which was to decide in the laſt reſort upon every thing dear to me. The ſame ſcrupulous fidelity reſtrains me from altering the manner of Mr. Collins's narrative to adapt it to the precepts of my own taſte; and it will ſoon be perceived how eſſential that narrative is to the elucidation of my own hiſtory.

The intention of my friend in this communication was to give me eaſe; but he in reality added to my embarraſſment. Hitherto I had had no intercourſe with the world and its paſſions; and, though I was not totally unacquainted with them as they appear in books, this proved to be of little ſervice to me when I came to witneſs them myſelf. The caſe ſeemed entirely altered, when the ſubject of thoſe paſſions was continually before my eyes, and the events had happened but the other day as it were, in the very neighbourhood where I lived. There was a connection and progreſs in this narrative, which made it altogether unlike the little village incidents I had hitherto known. My feelings

ings were ſucceſſively intereſted for the different perſons that were brought upon the ſcene. My veneration was excited for Mr. Clare, and my applauſe for the intrepidity of Mrs. Hammond. I was aſtoniſhed that any human creature ſhould be ſo ſhockingly perverted as Mr. Tyrrel. I paid the tribute of my tears to the memory of the artleſs Miſs Melvile. I found a thouſand freſh reaſons to admire and love my maſter.

At firſt I was ſatisfied with thus conſidering every incident in its obvious ſenſe. But the ſtory I had heard was for ever in my thoughts, and I was peculiarly intereſted to comprehend its full import. I turned it a thouſand ways, and examined it in every point of view. In the original communication it appeared ſufficiently diſtinct and ſatisfactory; but, as I brooded over it, it gradually became myſterious. There was ſomething ſtrange in the character of Hawkins. So firm, ſo ſturdily honeſt and juſt, as he appeared at firſt; all at once to become a murderer! His firſt behaviour under the proſecution, how accurately was it calculated to prepoſſeſs one in his favour! To be ſure, if he were guilty, it was very cruel of him to ſuffer a man of ſo much worth as Mr. Falkland to be tried for his crime! And yet I could not help bitterly compaſſionating the honeſt fellow, brought to the gallows, as he was, ſtrictly ſpeaking, by the machinations of that devil incarnate, Mr. Tyrrel. His ſon too, that ſon for whom he voluntarily ſacrificed his all, to die with him at the ſame tree; ſurely never was a ſtory more affecting!

Was it poſſible after all that Mr. Falkland ſhould be the murderer? The reader will ſcarcely believe that the idea ſuggeſted itſelf to my mind, that I would aſk him. It was but a paſſing thought; but it ſerves to mark the ſimplicity of my character. Then I recollected the virtues of my maſter,

almoſt too ſublime for human nature; I thought of his ſufferings ſo unexampled, ſo unmerited; and chid myſelf for the ſuſpicion. The dying confeſſion of Hawkins recurred to my mind; and I felt that there was no longer a poſſibility of doubting. And yet what was the meaning of all Mr. Falkland's agonies and terrors? In fine, the idea having once occurred to my mind, it was fixed there for ever. My thoughts fluctuated from conjecture to conjecture, but this was the centre about which they revolved. I determined to place myſelf as a watch upon my maſter.

The inſtant I had choſen this employment for myſelf, I found a ſtrange ſort of pleaſure in it. To do what is forbidden always has its charms, becauſe we have an indiſtinct apprehenſion of ſomething arbitrary and tyrannical in the prohibition. To be a ſpy upon Mr. Falkland! That there was danger in the employment ſerved to give an alluring pungency to the choice. I remembered the ſtern reprimand I had received, his terrible looks; and the recollection gave a kind of tingling ſenſation, not altogether unallied to enjoyment. The farther I advanced, the more the ſenſation was irreſiſtible. I ſeemed to myſelf perpetually upon the brink of being countermined, and perpetually rouſed to guard my deſigns. The more impenetrable Mr. Falkland was determined to be, the more uncontroulable was my curioſity. Through the whole my alarm and apprehenſion of perſonal danger, had a large mixture of frankneſs and ſimplicity, conſcious of meaning no ill, that made me continually ready to ſay every thing that was upon my mind, and would not ſuffer me to believe that, when things were brought to the teſt, any one could be ſeriouſly angry with me.

Theſe reflections led gradually to a new ſtate of my mind. When I had firſt removed into Mr. Falkland's

Falkland's family, the novelty of the ſcene rendered me cautious and reſerved. The diſtant and ſolemn manners of my maſter ſeemed to have annihilated my conſtitutional gaiety. But the novelty by degrees wore off, and my conſtraint in the ſame degree diminiſhed. The ſtory I had now heard, and the curioſity it excited, reſtored to me activity, eagerneſs and courage. I had always had a propenſity to communicate my thoughts; my age was naturally inclined to talkativeneſs; and I ventured occaſionally in a ſort of heſitating way, as if queſtioning whether ſuch a conduct might be allowed to expreſs my ſentiments as they aroſe, in the preſence of Mr. Falkland.

The firſt time I did ſo, he looked at me with an air of ſurpriſe, made me no anſwer, and preſently took occaſion to leave me. The experiment was ſoon after repeated. My maſter ſeemed half inclined to encourage me, and yet doubtful whether he might venture. He had been long a ſtranger to pleaſure of every ſort, and my artleſs and untaught remarks appeared to promiſe him ſome amuſement. In this uncertainty he could not probably find it in his heart to treat with ſeverity my innocent effuſions. I needed but little encouragement: for the perturbation of my mind ſtood in want of this relief. My ſimplicity, ariſing from my being a total ſtranger to the intercourſe of the world, was accompanied with a mind in ſome degree cultivated with reading, and perhaps not altogether deſtitute of obſervation and talent. My remarks were therefore perpetually unexpected, at one time implying extreme ignorance, and at another ſome portion of acuteneſs, but at all times having an air of innocence, frankneſs and courage. There was ſtill an apparent want of deſign in the manner, even after I was excited accurately to compare my obſervations and ſtudy the inferences to which they led;

for

for the effect of old habit was more viſible, than that of a recently-conceived purpoſe which was hardly yet mature. Mr. Falkland's ſituation was like that of a fiſh that plays with the bait employed to entrap him. By my manner he was in a certain degree encouraged to lay aſide his uſual reſerve and relax his ſtatelineſs; till ſome abrupt obſervation or interrogatory ſtung him into recollection and brought back his alarm. Still it was evident that he bore about him a ſecret wound. Whenever the cauſe of his ſorrows was touched, though in a manner the moſt indirect and remote, his countenance altered, his diſtemper returned, and it was with difficulty that he could ſuppreſs his emotions, ſometimes conquering himſelf with painful effort, and ſometimes burſting into a ſort of paroxiſm of inſanity, and haſtening to bury himſelf in ſolitude. Theſe appearances I too frequently interpreted into grounds of ſuſpicion, though I might with equal probability and more liberality have aſcribed them to the cruel mortifications he had encountered in the objects of his darling ambition. Mr. Collins had ſtrongly urged me to ſecrecy; and Mr. Falkland, whenever my geſture or his conſciouſneſs impreſſed him with the idea of my knowing more than I expreſſed, looked at me with wiſtful earneſtneſs, as queſtioning what was the degree of information I poſſeſſed, and how it was obtained. But again at our next interview the ſimple vivacity of my manner reſtored his tranquillity, obliterated the emotion of which I had been the cauſe, and placed things afreſh in their former ſituation. The longer this humble familiarity on my part had continued, the more effort it would require to ſuppreſs it; and Mr. Falkland was neither willing to mortify me by a ſevere prohibition of ſpeech, nor even perhaps to make me of ſo much conſequence as that prohibition might ſeem to imply. Though I

was

was curious, it muſt not be ſuppoſed that I had the object of my enquiry for ever in my mind, or that my queſtions and innuendos were perpetually regulated with the cunning of a grey-headed inquiſitor. The ſecret wound of Mr. Falkland's mind was much more uniformly preſent to his recollection than to mine; and a thouſand times he applied the remarks that occurred in converſation, when I had not the remoteſt idea of ſuch an application till ſome ſingularity in his manner brought it back to my thoughts. The conſciouſneſs of this morbid ſenſibility, and the imagination that its influence might perhaps conſtitute the whole of the caſe, ſerved probably to ſpur Mr. Falkland again to the charge, and connect a ſentiment of ſhame with every project that ſuggeſted itſelf for interrupting the freedom of our intercourſe.

I will give a ſpecimen of the converſations to which I allude, and as it ſhall be ſelected from thoſe which began upon topics the moſt general and remote, the reader will eaſily imagine the diſturbance that was almoſt daily endured by a mind ſo tremblingly alive as that of my maſter.

Pray, ſir, ſaid I, one day as I was aſſiſting Mr. Falkland in arranging ſome papers previouſly to their being tranſcribed into his collection, how came Alexander of Macedon to be ſurnamed the Great?

How came it? Did you never read his hiſtory?

Yes, ſir.

Well, Williams, and could you find no reaſons there?

Why, I do not know, ſir. I could find reaſons why he ſhould be famous; but every man that is talked of, is not admired. Judges differ about the merits of Alexander. Doctor Prideaux ſays in his Connections that he deſerves only to be called the Great

Great Cut-throat, and the author of Tom Jones has written a volume to prove that he and all other conquerors ought to be claſſed with Jonathan Wild.

Mr. Falkland involuntarily reddened at theſe citations.

Accurſed blaſphemy! Did theſe authors think that by the coarſeneſs of their ribaldry they could deſtroy his well-earned fame? Are learning, ſenſibility and taſte no ſecurities to exempt their poſſeſſor from this vulgar abuſe? Did you ever read, Williams, of a man more gallant, generous and free? Was ever mortal ſo completely the reverſe of every thing engroſſing and ſelfiſh? He formed to himſelf a ſublime image of excellence, and his only ambition was to realiſe it in his own ſtory. Remember his giving away every thing when he ſet out upon his grand expedition, profeſſedly reſerving for himſelf nothing but hope. Recollect his heroic confidence in Philip, the phyſician, and his entire and unalterable friendſhip for Epheſtion. He treated the captive family of Darius with the moſt cordial urbanity, and the venerable Syſigambis with all the tenderneſs and attention of a ſon to his mother. Never take the judgment, Williams, upon ſuch a ſubject of a clerical pedant or a Weſtminſter juſtice. Examine for yourſelf, and you will find in Alexander a model of honour, generoſity and diſintereſtedneſs, a man who for the cultivated liberality of his mind and the unparalleled grandeur of his projects muſt ſtand alone the ſpectacle and admiration of all ages of the world.

Ah, ſir! it is a very fine thing for us to ſit here and compoſe his panegyric. But would you have me forget what a vaſt expence was beſtowed in erecting the monument of his fame? Was not he the common diſturber of mankind? Did not he overrun nations that would never have heard of him, but for his devaſtations? How many hundred

dred thouſands of lives did he ſacrifice in his career? What muſt I think of his cruelties; a whole tribe maſſacred for a crime committed by their anceſtors one hundred and fifty years before; fifty thouſand ſold into ſlavery; two thouſand crucified for their gallant defence of their country? Man is ſurely a ſtrange ſort of creature, who never praiſes any one more heartily than him who has ſpread deſtruction and ruin over the face of nations!

The way of thinking you expreſs, Williams, is natural enough, and I cannot blame you for it. But let me hope that you will become more liberal. The death of a hundred thouſand men is at firſt ſight very ſhocking; but what in reality are a hundred thouſand ſuch men more than a hundred thouſand ſheep? It is mind, Williams, the generation of knowledge and virtue that we ought to love. This was the project of Alexander; he ſet out in a great undertaking to civiliſe mankind; he delivered the vaſt continent of Aſia from the ſtupidity and degradation of the Perſian monarchy; and, though he was cut off in the midſt of his career, we may eaſily perceive the vaſt effects of his project. Grecian literature and cultivation, the Seleucidæ, the Antiochuſes and the Ptolomies followed, in nations which before had been ſunk to the condition of brutes. Alexander was the builder as notoriouſly as the deſtroyer of cities.

And yet, ſir, I am afraid that the pike and the battle-axe are not the right inſtruments for making men wiſe. Suppoſe it were admitted that the lives of men were to be ſacrificed without remorſe if a paramount good were to reſult, it ſeems to me as if murder and maſſacre were but a very left-handed way of producing civiliſation and love. But pray, do not you think this great hero was a ſort of a madman? What now will you ſay to his

firing the palace of Perſepolis, his weeping for other worlds to conquer, and his marching his whole army over the burning ſands of Lybia, merely to viſit a temple, and perſuade mankind that he was the ſon of Jupiter Ammon?

Alexander, my boy, has been much miſunderſtood. Mankind have revenged themſelves upon him by miſrepreſentation, for having ſo far eclipſed the reſt of his ſpecies. It was neceſſary to the realiſing his project that he ſhould paſs for a God. It was the only way by which he could get a firm hold upon the veneration of the ſtupid and bigoted Perſians. It was this, and not a mad vanity, that was the ſource of his proceeding. And how much had he to ſtruggle with in this reſpect in the unapprehending obſtinacy of ſome of his Macedonians?

Why then, ſir, at laſt Alexander did but employ means that all politicians profeſs to uſe, as well as he. He dragooned men into wiſdom, and cheated them into the purſuit of their own happineſs. But what is worſe, ſir, this Alexander in the paroxyſm of his headlong rage ſpared neither friend nor foe. You will not pretend to juſtify the exceſſes of his ungovernable paſſion. It is impoſſible ſure that a word can be ſaid for a man whom a momentary provocation can hurry into the commiſſion of murders——

The inſtant I had uttered theſe words, I felt what it was that I had done. There was a magnetical ſympathy between me and my maſter, ſo that their effect was not ſooner produced upon him, than my own mind reproached me with the inhumanity of the alluſion. Our confuſion was mutual. The blood forſook at once the tranſparent complexion of Mr. Falkland, and then ruſhed back again with rapidity and fierceneſs. I dared not utter

utter a word, leſt I ſhould commit a new error worſe than that into which I had juſt fallen. After a ſhort, but ſevere, ſtruggle to continue the converſation, Mr. Falkland began with trepidation, but afterwards became calmer:

You are not candid—Alexander—You muſt learn more clemency—Alexander, I ſay, does not deſerve this rigour. Do you remember his tears, his remorſe, his determined abſtinence from food, which he could ſcarcely be perſuaded to alter? Did not that prove acute feeling and a rooted principle of equity?—Well, well, Alexander was a true and judicious lover of mankind, and his real merits have been little comprehended.

I know not how to make the ſtate of my mind at that moment accurately underſtood. When one idea has got poſſeſſion of the mind, it is ſcarcely poſſible to keep it from finding its way to the lips. Error, once committed, has a faſcinating power, like the eyes of the rattle-ſnake, to draw us into a ſecond error. It deprives us of that proud confidence in our own ſtrength, to which we are indebted for ſo much of our virtue. Curioſity is a reſtleſs propenſity, and often does but hurry us forward the more irreſiſtibly, the greater is the danger that attends its indulgence.

Clitus, ſaid I, was a man of very coarſe and provoking manners, was he not?

Mr. Falkland felt the full force of this appeal. He gave me a penetrating look as if he would ſee my very ſoul. His eyes were then in an inſtant withdrawn. I could perceive him ſeized with a convulſive ſhuddering, which, though ſtrongly counteracted, and therefore ſcarcely viſible, had I know not what of terrible in it. He left his employment, ſtrode about the room in anger, his viſage gradually aſſumed an expreſſion as of ſupernatural

natural barbarity, he quitted the apartment abruptly, and flung the door with a violence that ſeemed to ſhake the houſe.

Is this, ſaid I, the fruit of conſcious guilt, or of the diſguſt that a man of honour conceives at guilt undeſervedly imputed?

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

THE reader will feel how rapidly I was advancing to the brink of the precipice. I had a confuſed apprehenſion of what I was doing, but I could not ſtop myſelf. Is it poſſible, ſaid I, that Mr. Falkland, who is thus overwhelmed with a ſenſe of the unmerited diſhonour that has been faſtened upon him in the face of the word, will long endure the preſence of a raw and unfriended youth, who is perpetually bringing back that diſhonour to his recollection, and who ſeems himſelf the moſt forward to entertain the accuſation?

I felt indeed that Mr. Falkland would not haſtily incline to diſmiſs me, for the ſame reaſon that reſtrained him from many other actions which might ſeem to ſavour of a too tender and ambiguous ſenſibility. But this reflexion was little adapted to comfort me. That he ſhould cheriſh in his heart a growing hatred againſt me, and that he ſhould think himſelf obliged to retain me a continual thorn in his ſide, was an idea by no means of favourable augury to my future peace.

It was ſome time after this that in clearing out a caſe of drawers I found a paper that by ſome accident had ſlipped behind one of the drawers, and been overlooked. At another time perhaps my curioſity might have given way to the laws of decorum, and I ſhould have reſtored it unopened to my maſter, its owner. But my eagerneſs for information had been too much ſtimulated by the preceding incidents to allow me at preſent to neglect any

any occaſion of obtaining it. The paper proved to be a letter written by the elder Hawkins, and from its contents ſeemed to have been penned when he had firſt been upon the point of abſconding from the perſecutions of Mr. Tyrrel. It was as follows.

Honourable Sir,

I have waited ſome time in daily hope of your honour's return into theſe parts. Old Gines and his dame, who are left to take care of your houſe, tell me, they cannot ſay when that will be, nor juſtly in what part of England you are at preſent. For my ſhare misfortune comes ſo thick upon me, that I muſt determine upon ſomething (that is for certain), and out of hand. Our ſquire, who I muſt own at firſt uſed me kindly enough, though I am afraid that was partly out of ſpite to ſquire Underwood, has ſince determined to be the ruin of me. Sir, I have been no craven; I fought it up ſtoutly; for after all, you know, God bleſs your honour! it is but a man to a man; but he has been too much for me.

Perhaps if I were to ride over to the market town and enquire of Munſle, your lawyer, he could tell me how to direct to you. But having hoped and waited o' this faſhion, and all in vain, has put me upon other thoughts. I was in no hurry, ſir, to apply to you; for I do not love to be a trouble to other people. I kept that for my laſt ſtake. Well, ſir, and now that has failed me like, I am aſhamed as it were to have thought of it. Have not I, thinks I, arms and legs as well as other people? I am driven out of houſe and home. Well, and what then? Sure I an't a cabbage, that if you pull it out of the ground, it muſt die. I am pennyleſs. True; and how many hundreds are there that live from hand to mouth all the days of

of their life? (Begging your honour's pardon) thinks I, if we little folks had but the wit to do for ourſelves, the great folks would not be ſuch maggoty changelings as they are. They would begin to look about them.

But there is another thing that has ſwayed with me more than all the reſt. I do not know how to tell you, ſir—My poor boy, my Leonard, the pride of my life, has been three weeks in the county jail. It is true indeed, ſir. Squire Tyrrel put him there. Now, ſir, every time that I lay my head upon my pillow under my own little roof, my heart ſmites me with the ſituation of my Leonard. I do not mean ſo much for the hardſhip; I do not ſo much matter that. I do not expect him to go through the world upon velvet; I am not ſuch a fool. But who can tell what may hap in a jail? I have been three times to ſee him; and there is one man in the ſame quarter of the priſon that looks ſo wicked! I do not much fancy the looks of the reſt. To be ſure Leonard is as good a lad as ever lived. I think he will not give his mind to ſuch. But, come what will, I am determined he ſhall not ſtay among them twelve hours longer. I am an obſtinate old fool perhaps; but I have taken it into my head, and I will do it. Do not aſk me what. But, if I were to write to your honour, and wait for your anſwer, it might take a week or ten days more. I muſt not think of it!

Squire Tyrrel is very headſtrong, and you, your honour, might be a little hottiſh or ſo. No, I would not have any body quarrel for me. There has been miſchief enough done already; and I will get myſelf out of the way. So I write this, your honour, merely to unload my mind. I feel myſelf equally as much bound to reſpect and love you, as if you had done every thing for me that I believe you would have done if things had chanced differently.

ferently. It is moſt likely you will never hear of me any more. If it ſhould be ſo, ſet your worthy heart at reſt. I know myſelf too well ever to be tempted to do any thing that is really bad. I have now my fortune to ſeek in the world. I have been uſed ill enough, God knows. But I bear no malice; my heart is at peace with all mankind; and I forgive every body. It is like enough that poor Leonard and I may have hardſhip enough to undergo, among ſtrangers and being obliged to hide ourſelves like houſe-breakers or highwaymen. But I defy all the malice of fortune to make us do an ill thing. That conſolation we will always keep againſt all the croſſes of a heart-breaking world.

God bleſs you!

So prays,

Your honour's humble ſervant

to command,

BENJAMIN HAWKINS.

I read this letter with conſiderable attention, and it occaſioned me many reflections. To my way of thinking it contained a very intereſting picture of a blunt, downright, honeſt mind. It is a melancholy conſideration, ſaid I to myſelf; but ſuch is man! To have judged from appearances one would have ſaid, This is a fellow, to have taken fortune's buffets and rewards with an incorruptible mind. And yet ſee where it all ends! This man was capable of afterwards becoming a murderer, and finiſhing his life at the gallows. O poverty! thou art indeed omnipotent! Thou grindeſt us into deſperation; thou confoundeſt all our boaſted and moſt deep-rooted principles; thou filleſt us to the very brim with malice and revenge, and rendereſt us capable of acts of unknown horror! May I never be viſited by thee in the fulneſs of thy power!

Having

Having ſatisfied my curioſity with reſpect to this paper, I took care to diſpoſe of it in ſuch a manner as that it ſhould be found by Mr. Falkland; at the ſame time that, in obedience to the principle which at preſent governed me with abſolute dominion, I was willing that the way in which it offered itſelf to his attention, ſhould ſuggeſt to him the idea that it had poſſibly paſſed through my hands. The next morning I ſaw him, and I exerted myſelf to lead the converſation, which by this time I well knew how to introduce, by inſenſible degrees to the point I deſired. After ſeveral previous queſtions, remarks and rejoinders, I continued:

Well, ſir, after all, I cannot help feeling very uncomfortably as to my ideas of human nature, when I find that there is no dependence to be placed upon its perſeverance, and that, at leaſt among the illiterate, the moſt promiſing appearances may end in the foulеſt diſgrace.

You think then that literature and a cultivated mind are the only aſſurance for the conſtancy of our principles?

Um!—why do you ſuppoſe, ſir, that learning and ingenuity do not often ſerve people rather to hide their crimes, than to reſtrain them from committing them? Hiſtory tells us ſtrange things in that reſpect.

Williams! ſaid Mr. Falkland, a little diſturbed, you are ſtrangely given to cenſure and ſeverity.

I hope not. I am ſure I am moſt fond of looking on the other ſide of the picture, and conſidering how many men have been aſperſed, and even at ſome time or other almoſt torn to pieces by their fellow creatures, whom, when properly underſtood, we find worthy of our reverence and love.

Indeed, replied Mr. Falkland with a ſigh, when I conſider theſe things, I do not wonder at the dying exclamation of Brutus, O Virtue! I ſought thee

thee as a ſubſtance, but I find thee an empty name! I am too much inclined to be of his opinion.

Why to be ſure, ſir, innocence and guilt are too much confounded in human life. I remember a very affecting ſtory of a poor man in the reign of queen Elizabeth, who would have infallibly been hanged for murder upon the ſtrength of circumſtantial evidence, if the perſon really concerned had not been himſelf upon the jury, and prevented it.

In ſaying this I touched the ſpring that wakened madneſs in his mind. He came up to me with a ferocious countenance as if determined to force me into a confeſſion of my thoughts. A ſudden pang however ſeemed to change his deſign; he drew back with trepidation; and exclaimed, Deteſted be the univerſe, and the laws that govern it! Honour, juſtice, virtue are all the juggle of knaves! If it were in my power, I would inſtantly cruſh the whole ſyſtem into nothing!

I replied; Oh, ſir! things are not ſo bad as you imagine. The world was made for men of ſenſe to do what they will with it. Its affairs cannot be better than in the direction of the genuine heroes; and, as in the end they will be found the trueſt friends of the whole, ſo the multitude have nothing to do, but to look on, be faſhioned and admire.

Mr. Falkland made a powerful effort to recover his tranquillity. Williams! ſaid he, you inſtruct me well. You have a right notion of things, and I have great hopes of you. I will be more of a man. I will forget the paſt, and do better for the time to come. The future, the future is always our own.

I am ſorry, ſir, that I have given you pain. I am afraid to ſay all that I think. But it is my opinion that miſtakes will ultimately be cleared up,

juſtice

juſtice be done, and the true ſtate of things come to light in ſpite of the falſe colours that may for a time obſcure it.

The idea I ſuggeſted did not give Mr. Falkland the proper degree of delight. He ſuffered a temporary relapſe. Juſtice!—he muttered. I do not know what is juſtice. My caſe is not within the reach of common remedies; perhaps of none. I only know that I am miſerable. I began life with the beſt intentions and the moſt fervid philanthropy; and here I am—miſerable—miſerable beyond expreſſion or endurance.

Having ſaid this, he ſeemed ſuddenly to recollect himſelf, and re-aſſume his accuſtomed dignity and command. How came this converſation? cried he. Who gave you a right to be my confident? Baſe, artful wretch that you are! learn to be more reſpectful! Are my paſſions to be wound and unwound by an inſolent domeſtic? Do you think I will be an inſtrument to be played on at your pleaſure, till you have extorted all the treaſures of my ſoul? Begone, and fear leſt you be made to pay for the temerity you have already committed.

There was an energy and determination in the geſtures with which theſe words were accompanied that did not admit of their being diſputed. My mouth was cloſed; I felt as if deprived of all ſhare of activity, and was only able ſilently and paſſively to quit the apartment.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

TWO days ſubſequent to this converſation Mr. Falkland ordered me to be called to him. [I ſhall continue to ſpeak in my narrative of the ſilent, as well as the articulate part of the intercourſe between us. His countenance was habitually animated and expreſſive much beyond that of any other man I have ſeen. The curioſity, which, as I have ſaid, conſtituted at this time my ruling paſſion, ſtimulated me to make it my perpetual ſtudy. It will alſo moſt probably happen, while I am thus employed in collecting together the ſcattered incidents of my hiſtory, that I ſhall upon ſome occaſions annex to appearances an explanation, which I was far from poſſeſſing at the time, and was only ſuggeſted to me through the medium of ſubſequent events.]

Upon this occaſion Mr. Falkland's countenance exhibited an unwonted compoſure. This compoſure however did not ſeem to reſult from internal eaſe, but from an effort which, while he prepared himſelf for an intereſting ſcene, was exerted to prevent his preſence of mind and power of voluntary action from ſuffering any diminution.

Williams, ſaid he, I am determined, whatever it may coſt me, to have an explanation with you. You are a raſh and inconſiderate boy, and have given me a great deal of diſturbance. You ought to have known that, though I allow you to talk with me upon indifferent ſubjects, it is very improper in you to lead the converſation to any thing that

that relates to my perſonal concerns. You have ſaid many things lately in a very myſterious way, and appear to know ſomething more than I am aware of. I am equally at a loſs to gueſs how you came by your knowledge, as of what it conſiſts. But I think I perceive too much inclination on your part to trifle with my peace of mind. That ought not to be, nor have I deſerved any ſuch treatment from you. But, be that as it will, the gueſſes in which you oblige me to employ myſelf are too painful. It is a ſort of ſporting with my feeling, which, as a man of reſolution, I am determined to bring to an end. I expect you therefore to lay aſide all myſtery and equivocation, and inform me explicitly what it is upon which your alluſions are built. What is it you know? What is it you want? I have been too much expoſed already to an unparalleled mortification and hardſhip, and my wounds will not bear this perpetual handling.

I feel, ſir, anſwered I, how wrong I have been, and am aſhamed that ſuch a one as I ſhould have given you all this trouble and diſpleaſure. I felt it at the time; but I have been hurried along I do not know how. I have always tried to ſtop myſelf, but the devil that poſſeſſed me was too ſtrong for me. I know nothing, ſir, but what Mr. Collins told me. He told me the ſtory of Mr. Tyrrel and Miſs Melvile and Hawkins. I am ſure, ſir, he ſaid nothing but what was to your honour, and proved you to be more an angel than a man.

Well, ſir: I found a letter written by that Hawkins the other day: did not that letter fall into your hands? Did not you read it?

For God's ſake, ſir, turn me out of your houſe. Puniſh me in ſome way or other, that I may forgive myſelf. I am a fooliſh, wicked, deſpicable wretch. I confeſs, ſir, I did read the letter.

And

And how dared you read it? It was indeed very wrong of you. But we will talk of that by and by. Well, and what did you ſay to the letter? You know it ſeems that Hawkins was hanged.

I ſay, ſir? why it went to my heart to read it. I ſay, as I ſaid the day before yeſterday, that, when I ſee a man of ſo much principle, afterwards deliberately proceeding to the very worſt of crimes, I can ſcarcely bear to think of it.

That is what you ſay? It ſeems too you know, accurſed remembrance! that I was tried for this crime?

I was ſilent.

Well, ſir. You know too perhaps that, from the hour the crime was committed,—yes, ſir, that was the date [and, as he ſaid this, there was ſomewhat frightful, I had almoſt ſaid diabolical, in his countenance]—I have not had an hour's peace; I became changed from the happieſt into the moſt miſerable thing that lives; ſleep has fled from my eyes; joy has been a ſtranger to my thoughts; and annihilation I ſhould prefer a thouſand times to the being that I lead. As ſoon as I was capable of a choice, I choſe honour and the eſteem of mankind as a good I preferred to all others. You know, it ſeems, in how many ways my ambition has been diſappointed,—I do not thank Collins for having been the hiſtorian of my diſgrace,——Would to God that night could be blotted from the memory of man!——But the ſcene of that night, inſtead of periſhing, has been a ſource of ever new calamity to me, which muſt flow for ever! Am I then, thus miſerable and ruined, a proper ſubject for you upon which to exerciſe your ingenuity, and improve your power of tormenting? Was it not enough that I was publicly diſhonoured? that I was deprived by the peſtilential influence of ſome demon of the opportunity of avenging my diſ-

honour?

honour? No: in addition to this I have been tried upon the charge of having in this critical moment intercepted my own vengeance by the foulest of crimes. That trial is past. Misery itself has nothing worse in store for me except what you have inflicted: the seeming to doubt of my innocence which neither persecutor, nor judge, nor jury ever ventured to do. You have forced me to this explanation. You have extorted from me a confidence which I had no inclination to confer. But it is a part of the misery of my situation, that I am at the mercy of every creature, however little, who feels himself inclined to sport with my distress. Be content. You have brought me low enough.

Oh, sir! I am not content; I cannot be content! I cannot bear to think what I have done. I shall never again be able to look in the face the best of masters and the best of men. I beg of you, sir, to turn me out of your service. Let me go and hide myself where I may never see you more.

Mr. Falkland's countenance had indicated great severity through the whole of this conversation; but now it became more harsh and tempestuous than ever. How now, rascal! cried he. You want to leave me, do you? Who told you that I wished to part with you? But you cannot bear to live with such a miserable wretch as I am! You are not disposed to put up with the caprices of a man so dissatisfied and unjust!

Oh, sir! do not talk to me thus! Do with me any thing you will. Kill me if you please.

Kill you! [Volumes could not describe the emotions with which this echo of my words was given and received.]

Sir, I could die to serve you! I love you more than I can express. I worship you as a being of a superior nature. I am foolish, raw, inexperienced,

—worse

—worſe than any of theſe;—but never did a thought of diſloyalty to your ſervice enter into my heart.

Here our converſation ended; and the impreſſion it made upon my youthful mind it is impoſſible to deſcribe. I thought with aſtoniſhment, even with rapture, of the attention and kindneſs towards me I diſcovered in Mr. Falkland through all the roughneſs of his manner. I could never wonder enough at finding myſelf, humble as I was by my birth, obſcure as I had hitherto been, thus ſuddenly become of ſo much importance to the happineſs of one of the moſt enlightened and accompliſhed men in England. But this conſciouſneſs attached me to my maſter more eagerly than ever, and made me ſwear a thouſand times as I meditated upon my ſituation, that I would never prove unworthy of ſo generous a protector.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

IS it not unaccountable that, in the midſt of all my increaſed veneration for my maſter, the firſt tumult of my emotion was ſcarcely ſubſided, before the old queſtion that had excited my conjectures recurred to my mind, Was he the murderer? It was a kind of fatal impulſe that ſeemed deſtined to hurry me to deſtruction. I did not wonder at the diſturbance that was given to Mr. Falkland by any alluſion however diſtant to this fatal affair. That was as completely accounted for from the conſideration of his exceſſive ſenſibility in matters of honour, as it would have been upon the ſuppoſition of the moſt atrocious guilt. Knowing as he did, that ſuch a charge had once been connected with his name, he would of courſe be perpetually uneaſy, and ſuſpect ſome latent inſinuation at every poſſible opportunity. He would doubt and fear, leſt every man with whom he converſed harboured the fouleſt ſuſpicions againſt him. In my caſe he found that I was in poſſeſſion of ſome information more than he was aware of, without its being poſſible for him to decide to what it amounted, whether I had heard a juſt or unjuſt, a candid or calumniatory tale. He had alſo reaſon to ſuppoſe that I gave entertainment to thoughts derogatory to his honour, and that I did not form that favourable judgment which the exquiſite refinement of his ruling paſſion made indiſpenſable to his peace. All theſe conſiderations would of courſe maintain in him a ſtate of perpetual uneaſineſs.

But, though I could find nothing that I could conſider as juſtifying me in perſiſting in the ſhadow of a doubt, yet, as I have ſaid, the uncertainty and reſtleſſneſs of my contemplations would by no means depart from me.

The fluctuating ſtate of my mind produced a contention of oppoſite principles that by turns uſurped dominion over my conduct. Sometimes I was influenced by the moſt complete veneration for my maſter; I placed an unreſerved confidence in his integrity and his virtue, and implicitly ſurrendered my underſtanding for him to ſet it to what point he pleaſed. At other times the confidence, which had before flowed with the moſt plenteous tide, began to ebb; I was, as I had already been, watchful, inquiſitive, ſuſpicious, full of a thouſand conjectures as to the meaning of the moſt indifferent actions. Mr. Falkland, who was moſt painfully alive to every thing that related to his honour, ſaw theſe variations, and betrayed his conſciouſneſs of them now in one manner and now in another, frequently before I was myſelf aware, ſometimes almoſt before they exiſted. The ſituation of both was diſtreſſing; we were each of us a plague to the other; and I often wondered that the forbearance and benignity of my maſter was not at length exhauſted, and that he did not determine to thruſt from him for ever ſo inceſſant an obſerver. There was indeed one eminent difference between his ſhare in the tranſaction and mine. I had ſome conſolation in the midſt of my reſtleſſneſs. Curioſity is a principle that carries its pleaſures as well as its pains along with it. The mind is urged by a perpetual ſtimulus; it ſeems as if it were continually approaching to the end of its race; and, as the inſatiable deſire of ſatisfaction is its principle of conduct, ſo it promiſes itſelf in that ſatisfaction an unknown gratification, which ſeems as

if

if it were capable of fully compenſating any injuries that may be ſuffered in the career. But to Mr. Falkland there was no conſolation. What he endured in the intercourſe between us appeared to be all gratuitous evil. He had only to wiſh that there was no ſuch perſon as myſelf in the world, and to curſe the hour when his humanity led him to reſcue me from my obſcurity, and place me in his ſervice.

A conſequence produced upon me by the extraordinary nature of my ſituation it is neceſſary to mention. The conſtant ſtate of vigilance and ſuſpicion in which my mind was retained worked a very rapid change in my character. It ſeemed to have all the effect that might have been expected from years of obſervation and experience. The ſtrictneſs with which I endeavoured to remark what paſſed in the mind of one man, and the variety of conjectures into which I was led, appeared as it were to render me a competent adept in the different modes in which the human intellect diſplays its ſecret workings. I no longer ſaid to myſelf, as I had done in the beginning, "I will aſk Mr. Falkland whether he were the murderer." On the contrary, after having carefully examined the different kinds of evidence of which the ſubject was ſuſceptible, and recollecting all that had already paſſed upon the ſubject, it was not without conſiderable pain that I felt myſelf unable to diſcover any way in which I could be perfectly and unalterably ſatisfied of my maſter's innocence. As to his guilt, I could ſcarcely bring myſelf to doubt that in ſome way or other, ſooner or later, I ſhould arrive at the knowledge of that, if it really exiſted. But I could not endure to think almoſt for a moment of that ſide of the alternative as true; and, with all my ungovernable ſuſpicion, ariſing from the myſteriouſneſs of the circum-

ſtances, and the delight which a young and unfledged mind receives from ideas that give ſcope to all that imagination can picture of terrible or ſublime, I could not yet bring myſelf to conſider Mr. Falkland's guilt as a ſuppoſition attended with the remoteſt probability.

I hope the reader will forgive me for dwelling thus long on preliminary circumſtances. I ſhall come ſoon enough to the ſtory of my own miſery. I have already ſaid that one of the motives which induced me to the penning of this narrative was to conſole myſelf in my inſupportable diſtreſs. I derive a melancholy pleaſure from dwelling upon the circumſtances which imperceptibly paved the way to my ruin. While I recollect or deſcribe paſt ſcenes which occurred in a more favourable period of my life, my attention is called off for a ſhort interval from the hopeleſs misfortune in which I am at preſent involved. The man muſt indeed poſſeſs an uncommon portion of hardneſs of heart, who can envy me ſo ſlight a relief.—To proceed.

For ſome time after the explanation which had thus taken place between me and my maſter, his melancholy, inſtead of being in the ſlighteſt degree diminiſhed by the lenient hand of time, went on perpetually to increaſe. His fits of inſanity, for ſuch I muſt denominate them for want of a diſtinct appellation, though it is poſſible they might not fall under the definition that either the faculty or the court of chancery appropriate to that term, became ſtronger and more durable than ever. It was no longer practicable wholly to conceal them from the family and even from the neighbourhood. He would ſometimes without any previous notice abſent himſelf from his houſe for two or three days, unaccompanied by any ſervants or attendants. This was the more extraordinary, as it was well known

known that he paid no viſits, nor kept up any ſort of intercourſe with the gentlemen of the vicinity. But it was impoſſible that a man of Mr. Falkland's diſtinction and fortune ſhould long continue in ſuch a practice without its being diſcovered what was become of him, though a conſiderable part of our county was among the wildeſt and moſt deſolate diſtricts that are to be found in South Britain. Mr. Falkland was ſometimes ſeen climbing among the rocks, reclining motionleſs for hours together upon the edge of a precipice, or lulled into a kind of nameleſs lethargy of deſpair by the daſhing of the torrents. He would remain for whole nights together under the naked cope of heaven, inattentive to the conſideration either of place or time, inſenſible to the variations of the weather, or rather ſeeming to be delighted with that uproar of the elements which partially called off his attention from the diſcord and dejection which occupied his own mind.

At firſt, when we received intelligence at any time of the place to which Mr. Falkland had withdrawn himſelf, ſome perſon of his houſhold, Mr. Collins or myſelf, but moſt generally myſelf, as I was always at home, and always in the received ſenſe of that word at leiſure, went to him to perſuade him to return. But after a few experiments we thought it adviſeable to deſiſt, and to leave my maſter to prolong his abſence, or to terminate it, as might happen to ſuit his own inclination. Mr. Collins, whoſe grey hairs and long ſervices ſeemed to give him a ſort of right to be importunate, ſometimes ſucceeded; though even in that caſe there was nothing that could ſit more uneaſy upon Mr. Falkland than this inſinuation as if he wanted a guardian to take care of him, or as if he were, or were in danger of, falling into a ſtate in which he would be incapable of deliberately controuling his

his own words and actions. At one time he would ſullenly yield to his humble, venerable friend, murmuring grievouſly at the conſtraint that was put upon him, but without ſpirit enough even to complain of it with energy. At another time, even though complying, he would ſuddenly burſt out in a paroxyſm of reſentment. Upon theſe occaſions there was ſomething inconceivably, ſavagely terrible in his anger, that gave to the perſon againſt whom it was directed the moſt humiliating and inſupportable ſenſations. Me he always treated at theſe times with fierceneſs, and drove me from him with a vehemence, lofty, emphatical and ſuſtained beyond any thing of which I ſhould have thought human nature to be capable. Theſe ſallies ſeemed always to conſtitute a ſort of criſis in his indiſpoſition; and, whenever he was induced to ſuch a premature return, he would fall immediately after into a ſtate of the moſt melancholy inactivity, in which he uſually continued for two or three days. It was by an obſtinate fatality that, whenever I ſaw Mr. Falkland in theſe deplorable ſituations, and particularly when I lighted upon him after having ſought him among the rocks and precipices, pale, emaciated, ſolitary and haggard, the ſuggeſtion would continually recur to me, in ſpite of inclination, in ſpite of perſuaſion, and in ſpite of evidence, Surely this man is a murderer!

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

IT was in one of the lucid intervals, as I may term them, that occurred during this period, that a peaſant was brought before him, in his character of a juſtice of peace, upon an accuſation of having murdered his fellow. As Mr. Falkland had by this time acquired the repute of a melancholy valetudinarian, it is probable he would not have been called upon to act in his official character upon the preſent occaſion, had it not been that two or three of the neighbouring juſtices were all of them from home at once, ſo that he was the only one to be found in a circuit of many miles. The reader however muſt not imagine, though I have employed the word inſanity in deſcribing Mr. Falkland's ſymptoms, that he was by any means reckoned for a madman by the generality of thoſe who had occaſion to obſerve him. It is true that his behaviour at certain times was ſingular and unaccountable; but then at other times there was in it ſo much dignity, regularity and economy; he knew ſo well how to command and make himſelf reſpected; his actions and carriage were ſo condeſcending, conſiderate and benevolent; that, far from having forfeited the eſteem of the unfortunate or the many, they were loud and earneſt in his praiſes.

I was preſent at the examination of this peaſant. The moment I heard of the errand which had brought this rabble of viſitors, a ſudden thought ſtruck me. I conceived the poſſibility of rendering the

the incident ſubordinate to the great enquiry which drank up all the currents of my ſoul. I ſaid, This man is arraigned of murder, and murder is the maſter-key that wakes diſtemper in the mind of Mr. Falkland. I will watch him without remiſſion. I will trace all the mazes of his thought. Surely at ſuch a time his ſecret anguiſh muſt betray itſelf. Surely, if it be not my own fault, I ſhall now be able to diſcover the true ſtate of his plea before the tribunal of unerring juſtice.

I took my ſtation in a manner moſt favourable to the object upon which my mind was intent. I could perceive in Mr. Falkland's features as he entered a ſtrong reluctance to the buſineſs in which he was engaged; but there was no poſſibility of retreating. His countenance was embarraſſed and anxious; he ſcarcely ſaw any body. The examination had not proceeded far before he chanced to turn his eye to the part of the room where I was. It happened in this, as in ſome preceding inſtances; we exchanged a ſilent look by which we told volumes to each other. Mr. Falkland's complexion turned from red to pale, and from pale to red. I perfectly underſtood his feelings, and would willingly have withdrawn myſelf. But it was impoſſible; my paſſions were too deeply engaged; I was rooted to the ſpot: though my own life, that of my maſter, or almoſt of a whole nation had been at ſtake, I had no power to change my poſition.

The firſt ſurpriſe however having ſubſided, Mr. Falkland aſſumed a look of determined conſtancy, and even ſeemed to increaſe in ſelf-poſſeſſion much beyond what could have been expected from his firſt entrance. This he could probably have maintained, had it not been that the ſcene, inſtead of being permanent, was in ſome ſort perpetually changing. The man who was brought before him

was

was vehemently accuſed by the brother of the deceaſed as having acted from the moſt rooted malice. He ſwore that there had been an old grudge between the parties, and related ſeveral inſtances of it. He affirmed that the murderer had ſought the earlieſt opportunity of wreaking his revenge, had ſtruck the firſt blow, and, though the conteſt was in appearance only a common boxing match, had watched the occaſion of giving a fatal ſtroke which was followed by the inſtant death of his antagoniſt.

While the accuſer was giving in his evidence, the accuſed diſcovered every token of the moſt poignant ſenſibility. At one time his features were convulſed with anguiſh, tears unbidden rolled down his manly cheeks; and at another he ſtarted with aſtoniſhment at the unfavourable turn that was given to the narrative, though without betraying any impatience to interrupt. I never ſaw a man leſs ferocious in his appearance. He was tall, well made and comely. His countenance was ingenuous and benevolent, without folly. By his ſide ſtood a young woman, his ſweetheart, extremely agreeable in her perſon, and her looks teſtifying how deeply ſhe intereſted herſelf in the fate of her lover. The accidental ſpectators were divided between indignation againſt the enormity of the ſuppoſed criminal, and compaſſion for the poor girl that accompanied him. They ſeemed to take little notice of the favourable appearances viſible in the perſon of the accuſed, till in the ſequel thoſe appearances were more forcibly ſuggeſted to their attention. For Mr. Falkland, he was at one moment engroſſed by curioſity and earneſtneſs to inveſtigate the tale, while at another he betrayed a ſort of revulſion of ſentiment which made the inveſtigation too painful for him to ſupport.

When the accuſed was called upon for his defence, he readily owned the miſunderſtanding that

had exiſted, and that the deceaſed was the worſt enemy he had in the world. Indeed he was his only enemy, and he could not tell the reaſon that had made him ſo. He had employed every poſſible effort to overcome his animoſity, but in vain. The deceaſed had upon all occaſions ſought to mortify him, and do him an ill turn; but he had reſolved never to be engaged in a broil with him, and till this day he had ſucceeded. If he had met with a misfortune with any other man, people at leaſt might have thought it matter of accident; but now it would always be believed that he had acted from ſecret malice and a bad heart.

The fact was that he and his ſweetheart had gone to a neighbouring fair, where this man had met them. The man had often tried to affront him, and his paſſiveneſs, interpreted into cowardice, had perhaps encouraged the other to additional rudeneſs. Finding that he had endured trivial inſults to himſelf with an even temper, the deceaſed now thought proper to turn his brutality upon the young woman that accompanied him. He purſued them; he endeavoured in various manners to harraſs and vex them; they had ſought in vain to ſhake him off. The young woman was conſiderably terrified. The accuſed expoſtulated with their perſecutor, and aſked him how he could be ſo barbarous as to perſiſt in frightening a woman? He replied with an inſulting tone, Then the woman ſhould find ſome one able to protect her; people that encouraged and truſted to ſuch a thief as that, deſerved no better! The accuſed tried every expedient he could invent; at length he could endure it no longer; he became exaſperated, and challenged the aſſailant. The challenge was accepted; a ring was formed; he confided the care of his ſweet-heart to a byſtander; and unfortunately the firſt blow he ſtruck proved fatal.

The

The accuſed added that he did not care what became of him. He had been anxious to go through the world in an inoffenſive manner, and now he had the guilt of blood upon him. He did not know but it would be a kindneſs in them to hang him out of the way; for his conſcience would reproach him as long as he lived, and the figure of the deceaſed, as he had laid ſenſeleſs and without motion at his feet, would perpetually haunt him. The thought of this man, at one moment full of life and vigour, and the next lifted a helpleſs corpſe from the ground, and all owing to him, was a thought too dreadful to be endured. He had loved the poor maiden who had been the innocent occaſion of this with all his heart, but from this time he ſhould never ſupport the ſight of her. The ſight would bring a tribe of fiends in its rear. One unlucky minute had poiſoned all his hopes, and made life a burden to him.—Saying this his countenance fell, the muſcles of his face trembled with agony, and he looked the ſtatue of depair.

This was the ſtory of which Mr. Falkland was called upon to be the auditor. Though the incidents were for the moſt part wide of thoſe which belonged to the adventures we have juſt related, and there had been much leſs policy and ſkill diſplayed on either part in this ruſtic encounter, yet there were many points which, to a man who bore the former ſtrongly in his recollection, ſuggeſted a ſufficient reſemblance. Theſe points perpetually ſmote upon the heart of Mr. Falkland. He at one time ſtarted with aſtoniſhment, and at another ſhifted his poſture like a man who is unable longer to endure the ſenſations that preſs upon him. Then he new-ſtrung his nerves to ſtubborn patience. I could ſee, while his muſcles preſerved an inflexible ſteadineſs, tears of unbidden anguiſh roll down his cheeks. He dared not truſt his eyes to glance towards

wards the ſide of the room where I ſtood; and this gave an air of embarraſſment to his whole figure. But, when the accuſed came to ſpeak of his own feelings, to deſcribe the depth of his compunction for an involuntary fault, he could endure it no longer. He ſuddenly roſe, and with every mark of horror and deſpair ruſhed out of the room.

This circumſtance made no material difference in the affair of the accuſed. The parties were detained about half an hour. Mr. Falkland had already heard the material parts of the evidence in perſon. At the expiration of that interval, he ſent for Mr. Collins out of the room. The ſtory of the culprit was confirmed by many witneſſes who had ſeen the tranſaction. Word was brought that my maſter was indiſpoſed, and at the ſame time the accuſed was ordered to be diſcharged. The vengeance of the brother however, as I afterwards underſtood, did not reſt here, and he found a magiſtrate more ſcrupulous or more deſpotic, by whom the culprit was committed.

This affair was no ſooner concluded than I haſtened into the garden, and plunged into the deepeſt of its thickets. My mind was full almoſt to burſting. I no ſooner conceived myſelf ſufficiently removed from all obſervation, than my thoughts forced their way ſpontaneouſly to my tongue, and I exclaimed in a fit of uncontroulable enthuſiaſm: "This is the murderer! the Hawkinses were innocent! I am ſure of it! I will pledge my life of it! It is out! It is diſcovered! Guilty upon my ſoul!"

While I thus proceeded with haſty ſteps along the moſt ſecret paths of the garden, and from time to time gave vent to the tumult of my thoughts in involuntary exclamations, I felt as if my animal ſyſtem had undergone a total revolution. My blood boiled within me. I was conſcious to a kind of rapture for which I could not account. I was ſolemn,

yet

yet full of rapid emotion, burning with indignation and energy. In the very tempeſt and hurricane of the paſſions, I ſeemed to enjoy the moſt ſoul-raviſhing calm. I cannot better expreſs the then ſtate of my mind, than by ſaying, I was never ſo perfectly alive as at that moment.

This ſtate of mental elevation continued for ſeveral hours, but at length ſubſided and gave place to more deliberate reflection. One of the firſt queſtions that then occurred was, What ſhall I do with the knowlege I have been ſo eager to acquire? I had no inclination to turn informer. I felt, what I had had no previous conception of, that it was poſſible to love a murderer, and, as I then underſtood it, the worſt of murderers. I conceived it to be in the higheſt degree abſurd and iniquitous to cut off a man qualified for the moſt eſſential and extenſive utility merely out of retroſpect to an act which, whatever were its merits, could not now be retrieved.

This thought led me to another which had at firſt paſſed unnoticed. If I had been diſpoſed to turn informer, what had occurred amounted to no evidence that was admiſſible in a court of juſtice. Well then, added I, if it be ſuch as would not be admitted at a criminal tribunal, am I ſure it is ſuch as I ought to admit? There were twenty perſons beſide myſelf preſent at the ſcene from which I pretend to derive ſuch entire conviction. Not one of them ſaw it in the light that I did. It either appeared to them a caſual and unimportant circumſtance, or they thought it ſufficiently accounted for by Mr. Falkland's infirmity and misfortunes. Did it really contain ſuch an extent of arguments and application, that nobody but I was diſcerning enough to ſee?

But all this reaſoning produced no alteration in my way of thinking. For this time I could not get

get it out of my mind for a moment: "Mr. Falkland is the murderer! He is guilty! I ſee it! I feel it! I am ſure of it!" Thus was I hurried along by an uncontroulable deſtiny. The ſtate of my paſſions in their progreſſive career, the inquiſitiveneſs and impatience of my thoughts, appeared to make this determination unavoidable.

An incident occured while I was in the garden, that ſeemed to make no impreſſion upon me at the time, but which I recollected when my thoughts were got into ſomewhat of a ſlower motion. In the midſt of one of my paroxyſms of exclamation, and when I thought myſelf moſt alone, the ſhadow of a man as avoiding me paſſed tranſiently by me at a ſmall diſtance. Though I had ſcarcely caught a faint glimpſe of his perſon, there was ſomething in the occurrence that perſuaded me it was Mr. Falkland. I ſhuddered at the poſſibility of his having overheard the words of my ſoliloquy. But this idea, alarming as it was, had not power immediately to ſuſpend the career of my reflections. Subſequent circumſtances however brought back the apprehenſion to my mind. I had ſcarcely a doubt of its reality, when dinner time came, and Mr. Falkland was not to be found. Supper and bed-time paſſed in the ſame manner. The only concluſion made by his ſervants upon this circumſtance was, that he was gone upon one of his accuſtomed melancholy rambles.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

THE period at which my ſtory is now arrived ſeemed as if it were the very criſis of the fortune of Mr. Falkland. Incident followed upon incident in a kind of breathleſs ſucceſſion. About nine o'clock the next morning an alarm was given that one of the chimnies of the houſe was on fire. No accident could be apparently more trivial; but preſently it blazed with ſuch fury, as to make it clear that ſome beam of the houſe, which in the firſt building had been improperly placed, had been reached by the flames. Some danger was apprehended for the whole edifice. The confuſion was the greater, in conſequence of the abſence of the maſter, as well as of Mr. Collins, the ſteward. While ſome of the domeſtics were employed in endeavouring to extinguiſh the flames, it was thought proper that others ſhould buſy themſelves in removing the moſt valuable moveables to a lawn in the garden. I took ſome command in the affair, to which indeed my ſtation in the family ſeemed to entitle me, and for which I was thought qualified by my underſtanding and mental reſources.

Having given ſome general directions, I conceived that it was not enough to ſtand by and ſuperintend, but that I ſhould contribute my perſonal labour in the public concern. I ſet out for that purpoſe; and my ſteps by ſome myſterious fatality were directed to the private apartment at the end of the library. Here, as I looked round, my eye

was

was ſuddenly caught by the cheſt mentioned in the firſt pages of my narrative.

My mind was already raiſed to its utmoſt pitch. In a window-ſeat of the room lay a parcel of chiſſels and other carpenter's tools. I know not what infatuation inſtantaneouſly ſeized me. The idea was too powerful to be reſiſted. I forgot the buſineſs upon which I came, the employment of the ſervants and the urgency of general danger. I ſhould have done the ſame, if the apartment round me had been in flames. I ſnatched a tool ſuitable for the purpoſe, threw myſelf upon the ground, and applied with eagerneſs to a magazine which incloſed all for which my heart panted. After two or three efforts, in which the energy of uncontroulable paſſion was added to my bodily ſtrength, the faſtenings gave way, the cheſt opened, and all that I ſought was at once within my reach.

I was in the act of lifting up the lid, when Mr. Falkland entered, wild, breathleſs, diſtraction in his looks! He had been brought home from a conſiderable diſtance by the ſight of the flames. At the moment of his appearance the lid dropt down from my hand. He no ſooner ſaw me, than his eyes emitted ſparks of rage. He ran with eagerneſs to a brace of loaded piſtols which hung up in the room, and, ſeizing one, preſented it to my head. I ſaw his deſign, and ſprang to avoid it; but with the ſame rapidity with which he had formed his reſolution, he changed it, and inſtantly went to the window and flung the piſtol into the court below. He bade me begone with his uſual irreſiſtible energy; and, overcome as I was already by the horror of the detection, I eagerly complied.

A moment after a conſiderable part of the chimney was tumbled with noiſe into the court below, and a voice exclaimed that the fire was more violent than ever. Theſe circumſtances ſeemed to produce

produce a mechanical effect upon my maſter, who, having firſt locked the cloſet, appeared on the outſide of the houſe, aſcended the roof, and was in a moment in every place where his preſence was required. The flames were preſently extinguiſhed.

The reader can with difficulty form a conception of the ſtate to which I was now reduced. My act was in ſome ſort an act of inſanity; but how undeſcribable are the feelings with which I looked back upon it! It was an inſtantaneous impulſe, a ſhort lived and paſſing alienation of mind; but what muſt Mr. Falkland think of that alienation? To any man a perſon, who had once ſhown himſelf capable of ſo wild a flight of the mind, muſt appear dangerous; how muſt he appear to a man under Mr. Falkland's circumſtances? I had juſt had a piſtol held to my head by a man reſolved to put a period to my exiſtence. That indeed was paſt; but what was it that fate had yet in reſerve for me! The inſatiable vengeance of a Falkland, of a man whoſe hands were to my apprehenſion red with blood and his thoughts familiar with cruelty and murder. How great were the reſources of his mind, reſources henceforth to be confederated for my deſtruction! This was the termination of an ungoverned curioſity, an impulſe that I had repreſented to myſelf as ſo innocent and ſo venial.

In the high tide of boiling paſſion I had overlooked all conſequences. It now appeared to me like a dream. Is it in man to leap from the high-raiſed precipice, or ruſh unconcerned into the midſt of flames? Was it poſſible I could have forgotten for a moment the awe-creating manners of Falkland, and the inexorable fury I ſhould awake in his ſoul? No thought of future ſecurity had reached my mind. I had acted upon no plan. I had conceived no means of concealing my deed, after

it

it had once been effected. But it was over now. One ſhort minute had effected a reverſe in my ſituation, the ſuddenneſs of which the hiſtory of man perhaps is unable to ſurpaſs.

I have always been at a loſs to account for my having plunged thus headlong into an act ſo monſtrous. There is ſomething in it of unremarked and involuntary ſympathy. One ſentiment flows by neceſſity of nature into another ſentiment of the ſame general character. This was the firſt inſtance in which I had witneſſed a danger by fire. All was confuſion around me, and all changed into hurricane within. The general ſituation to my unpractiſed apprehenſion partook of deſperate, and I by contagion became alike deſperate. At firſt I had been in ſome degree calm and collected, but that too was a deſperate effort, and when it gave way, a kind of inſtant inſanity became its ſucceſſor.

I had now every thing to fear. And yet what was my fault? It proceeded from none of thoſe errors which are juſtly held up to the averſion of mankind; my object had been neither wealth, nor the means of indulgence, nor the uſurpation of power. No ſpark of malignity had harboured in my ſoul. I had always reverenced the ſublime mind of Mr. Falkland; I reverenced it ſtill. My offence had merely been a miſtaken thirſt of knowledge. Such however it was as to admit neither of forgiveneſs nor remiſſion. This epoch was the criſis of my fate, dividing what may be called the offenſive part, from the defenſive which was the ſole buſineſs of my remaining years. Alas, my offence was ſhort, not aggravated by any ſiniſter intention: but the repriſals I was to ſuffer, are long, and can terminate only with my life!

In the ſtate in which I found myſelf, when the recollection of what I had done flowed back upon my

my mind, I was incapable of any reſolution. All was chaos and uncertainty within me. My thoughts were too full of horror to be ſuſceptible of activity. I felt deſerted of my intellectual powers, palſied in mind, and compelled to ſit in ſpeechleſs expectation of the miſery to which I was deſtined. To my own conception I was like a man, who, though blaſted with lightning and deprived for ever of the power of motion, ſhould yet retain the conſciouſneſs of his ſituation. Death-dealing deſpair was the only idea of which I was ſenſible.

I was ſtill in this ſituation of mind when Mr. Falkland ſent for me. His meſſage rouſed me from my trance. In recovering I felt thoſe ſickening and loathſome ſenſations, which a man may be ſuppoſed at firſt to endure who ſhould return from the ſleep of death. Gradually I recovered the power of arranging my ideas and directing my ſteps. I underſtood that the minute the affair of the chimney was over Mr. Falkland had retired to his own room. It was evening before he ordered me to be called.

I found in him every token of extreme diſtreſs, except that there was an air of ſolemn and ſad compoſure that crowned the whole. For the preſent all appearance of gloom, ſtatelineſs and auſterity was gone. As I entered, he looked up, and, ſeeing who it was, ordered me to bolt the door. I obeyed. He himſelf went round the room, and examined all its other avenues. He then returned to where I was. I trembled in every joint of my frame. I exclaimed within myſelf, "What bloody "ſcene has Roſcius now to act?"

Williams, ſaid he, in a tone that had more in it of ſorrow than reſentment, I have attempted your life! I am a wretch devoted to the ſcorn and execration of mankind!—There he ſtopped.

If

If there be one being in the whole earth, that feels the ſcorn and execration due to ſuch a wretch more ſtrongly than another, it is myſelf. I have been kept in a ſtate of perpetual torture and madneſs. But I can put an end to it and its conſequences; and, ſo far at leaſt as relates to you, I am determined to do it. I know the price, and—I will make the purchaſe.

You muſt ſwear, ſaid he. You muſt atteſt every ſacrament, divine and human, never to diſcloſe what I am now to tell you.—He dictated the oath, and I repeated it with an aching heart. I had no power to offer a word of remark.

This confidence, ſaid he, is of your ſeeking, not of mine. It is odious to me, as it is dangerous to you.

Having thus prefaced the diſcloſure he had to make, he pauſed. He ſeemed to collect himſelf as for an effort of magnitude. He wiped his face with his handkerchief. The moiſture that incommoded him appeared not to be tears, but ſweat.

Look at me. Obſerve me. Is it not ſtrange that ſuch a one as I ſhould retain lineaments of a human creature? I am the blackeſt of villains. I am the murderer of Tyrrel. I am the aſſaſſin of the Hawkinſes.

I ſtarted, as if I had trod upon a rattle-ſnake.

What a ſtory is mine! Inſulted, diſgraced, polluted in the face of hundreds, I was capable of any act of deſperation. I watched my opportunity, followed Mr. Tyrrel from the rooms, ſeized a ſharp-pointed knife that fell in my way, came behind him, and ſtabbed him to the heart. My gigantic oppreſſor rolled at my feet.

All are but links of one chain. A blow! A murder! My next buſineſs was to defend myſelf, to tell ſo well digeſted a lie, as that all mankind

ſhould

ſhould believe it true. Never was a taſk ſo harrowing and intolerable!

Well: thus far fortune favoured me. She favoured me beyond my deſire. The guilt was removed from me, and caſt upon another; but this I was to endure. Whence came the circumſtantial evidence againſt him, the broken knife and the blood, I am unable to tell. I ſuppoſe by ſome miraculous accident he was paſſing by, and endeavoured to aſſiſt his oppreſſor in the agonies of death. You have heard Hawkins's ſtory; you have read one of his letters. But you do not know the thouſandth part of the proofs of his ſimple and unalterable rectitude that I have known. His ſon ſuffered with him, that ſon for the ſake of whoſe happineſs and virtue he ruined himſelf, and would have died a hundred times.——I have had feelings, but I cannot deſcribe them.

This it is to be a gentleman! a man of honour! I was the fool of fame. My virtue, my honeſty, my everlaſting peace of mind were cheap ſacrifices to be made at the ſhrine of this divinity. But, what is worſe, there is nothing that has happened that has in any degree contributed to my cure. I am as much the fool of fame as ever, I cling to it to my laſt breath. Though I be the blackeſt of villains, I will leave behind me a ſpotleſs and illuſtrious name. There is no crime ſo malignant, no ſcene of blood ſo horrible, in which that object cannot engage me. It is no matter that I regard theſe things at a diſtance with averſion;——I am ſure of it; bring me to the teſt, and I ſhall yield. I deſpiſe myſelf; but thus I am; things are gone too far to be recalled.

Why is it that I am compelled to this confidence? From the love of fame. I ſhould tremble at the ſight of every piſtol, or inſtrument of death that offered itſelf to my hands; and perhaps my next

next murder may not be ſo fortunate as thoſe I have already committed. I had no alternative but to make you my confident or my victim. It was better to truſt you with the whole truth under every ſeal of ſecrecy, than to live in perpetual fear of your penetration or your raſhneſs.

Do you know what it is you have done? To gratify a fooliſhly inquiſitive humour you have ſold yourſelf. You ſhall continue in my ſervice, but can never ſhare in my affection. I will benefit you in reſpect of fortune, but I ſhall always hate you. If ever an unguarded word eſcape from your lips, if ever you excite my jealouſy or ſuſpicion, expect to pay for it by your death or worſe. It is a dear bargain you have made. But it is too late to look back. I charge and adjure you by every thing that is ſacred and that is tremendous, preſerve your faith!

My tongue has now for the firſt time for ſeveral years ſpoken the language of my heart; and the intercourſe from this hour ſhall be ſhut for ever. I want no pity. I deſire no conſolation. Surrounded as I am with horrors, I will at leaſt preſerve my fortitude to the laſt. If I had been reſerved to a different deſtiny, I have qualities in that reſpect worthy of a better cauſe. I can be mad, miſerable and frantic, but even in frenzy I can preſerve my preſence of mind and diſcretion.

Such was the ſtory I had been ſo earneſtly deſirous to know. Though my mind had brooded upon the ſubject for months, there was not a ſyllable of it that did not come to my ear with the moſt perfect ſenſe of novelty. Mr. Falkland is a murderer! ſaid I, as I retired from the conference. This dreadful appellative "a murderer," made my very blood run cold within me. He killed Mr. Tyrrel, for he could not controul his reſentment and anger: he ſacrificed Hawkins the elder and

Hawkins

Hawkins the younger, becauſe he could upon no terms endure the public loſs of honour: how can I expect that a man thus paſſionate and unrelenting will not ſooner or later make me his victim?

But notwithſtanding this terrible application of the ſtory, an application to which perhaps in ſome form or other mankind are indebted for nine-tenths of their abhorrence againſt vice, I could not help occaſionally recurring to reflections of an oppoſite nature. Mr. Falkland is a murderer! reſumed I. He might yet be a moſt excellent man, if he did but think ſo. It is the thinking ourſelves vicious then, that principally contributes to make us vicious?

Amidſt the ſhock I received from finding, what I had never ſuffered myſelf conſtantly to believe, that my ſuſpicions were true; I ſtill diſcovered new cauſe of admiration for my maſter. His menaces indeed were terrible. But, when I recollected the offence I had given, ſo contrary to every received principle of civilized ſociety, ſo inſolent and rude, ſo intolerable to a man of Mr. Falkland's elevation and in Mr. Falkland's peculiarity of circumſtances, I was aſtoniſhed at his forbearance. There were indeed ſufficiently obvious reaſons why he might not chooſe to proceed to extremities with me. But how different from the fearful expectations I had conceived were the calmneſs of his behaviour and the regulated mildneſs of his language! In this reſpect I for a ſhort time imagined that I was emancipated from the miſchiefs which had appalled me, and that in having to do with a man of Mr. Falkland's liberality I had nothing rigorous to apprehend.

It is a miſerable proſpect, ſaid I, that he holds up to me. He imagines that I am reſtrained by no principles, and deaf to the claims of perſonal excellence. But he ſhall find himſelf miſtaken. I will

will never become an informer. I will never injure my maſter; and therefore he will not be my enemy. With all his misfortunes and all his errors, I feel that my ſoul yearns for his welfare. If he have been criminal, that is owing to circumſtances; the ſame qualities under other circumſtances would have been, or rather were ſublimely beneficent.

My reaſonings were no doubt infinitely more favourable to my maſter than thoſe which human beings are accuſtomed to make in the caſe of ſuch as they ſtyle great criminals. This will not be wondered at, when it is conſidered that I had myſelf juſt been trampling on the eſtabliſhed boundaries of obligation, and therefore might well have a fellow-feeling for other offenders. Add to which, I had known Mr. Falkland from the firſt as a beneficent divinity. I had obſerved at leiſure and with a minuteneſs which could not deceive me the excellent qualities of his heart, and I found him poſſeſſed of a mind beyond compariſon the moſt fertile and accompliſhed I had ever known.

But, though the terrors which had impreſſed me were conſiderably alleviated, my ſituation was notwithſtanding ſufficiently miſerable. The eaſe and light-heartedneſs of my youth were for ever gone. The voice of an irreſiſtible neceſſity had commanded me to "ſleep no more." I was tormented with a conſcious ſecret of which I muſt never diſburthen myſelf; and this conſciouſneſs was at my age a ſource of perpetual melancholy. I had made myſelf a priſoner, in the moſt intolerable ſenſe of that term, for years, perhaps for the reſt of my life. Though my prudence and diſcretion ſhould be invariable, I muſt remember that I ſhould have an overſeer, vigilant from conſcious guilt, full of reſentment at the unjuſtifiable means by which I had extorted from him a confeſſion, and whoſe lighteſt

lighteſt caprice might at any time decide upon every thing that was dear to me. The vigilance even of a public and ſyſtematical deſpotiſm is poor, compared with a vigilance which is thus goaded by the moſt anxious paſſions of the ſoul. Againſt this ſpecies of perſecution I knew not how to invent a refuge. I dared neither fly from the obſervation of Mr. Falkland, nor continue expoſed to its operation. I was at firſt indeed lulled in a certain degree to ſecurity upon the verge of the precipice, But it was not long before I found a thouſand circumſtances perpetually reminding me of my true ſituation. Thoſe I am now to relate are among the moſt memorable.

CHAP. XIX.

IN no long time after the diſcloſure Mr. Falkland had made, Mr. Foreſter, his elder brother by the mother's ſide, came to reſide for a ſhort period in our family. This was a circumſtance peculiarly adverſe to my maſter's habits and inclinations. He had broken off, as I have already ſaid, all intercourſe of viſiting his neighbours. He debarred himſelf every kind of amuſement and relaxation. He ſhrunk from the ſociety of his fellows, and thought he could never be ſufficiently buried in obſcurity and ſolitude. This principle was in moſt caſes of no difficult execution to a man of firmneſs. But Mr. Falkland knew not how to avoid the viſit of Mr. Foreſter. This gentleman was juſt returned from a reſidence of ſeveral years upon the continent, and his demand of an apartment in the houſe of his half-brother till his own houſe at the diſtance of thirty miles ſhould be prepared for his reception, was made with an air of confidence that ſcarcely admitted of a refuſal. Mr. Falkland could only ſay that the ſtate of his health and ſpirits was ſuch, that he feared a reſidence at his houſe would be little agreeable to his kinſman; and Mr. Foreſter conceived that this was a diſqualification which would always augment in proportion as it was tolerated, and hoped that his ſociety, by inducing Mr. Falkland to ſuſpend his habits of ſecluſion, would be the means of eſſential benefit. Mr. Falkland oppoſed him no farther. He would have been ſorry to be thought unkind to a kinſman for whom

whom he had a particular eſteem; and the conſciouſneſs of not daring to aſſign the true reaſon, made him cautious of adhering to his objection.

The character of Mr. Foreſter was in many reſpects the reverſe of that of my maſter. Like him he had ſeen much of the world; but to judge of him from the unfaſhioned bluntneſs of his manner, you would have thought he had never ſtirred from his fire-ſide. Yet under this rude exterior it was eaſy to diſtinguiſh various knowledge, nice diſcrimination, and a ſtrong and active mind. Nor was it ill-humour or miſanthropy that gave this turn to Mr. Foreſter's behaviour. He diſclaimed exaggeration of every kind, and was equally averſe to the cynic who paints every thing in the moſt ſplenetic colours, and the ſanguine enthuſiaſt to whom the whole appears to be exactly as it ought. In the mean time, while he hated exaggeration, he was himſelf one of its groſſeſt dupes. He was poſitive in all things, even where good ſenſe required him to be ſceptical; and he roughly imputed perverſeneſs, where true wiſdom would have taught him to correct miſtake. The ſame inconſiſtency followed him throughout. Full of originality and genius, he pretended to deſpiſe them in others. His favourite principle was to care nothing for what the world ſhould ſay, and to aim only at doing right. So long as that debt was diſcharged, he would not ſtoop to purchaſe, at the expence of moving a finger, the applauſe of mankind in preference to their hatred. He believed that the credit which is ſometimes given to men of ability, was the diſhoneſt gains of a combination, not the juſt reward of merit; and he took pleaſure in ſtating this opinion in its harſheſt form. He held that an honeſt ploughman is a more uſeful member of ſociety, than all the poets and philoſophers that ever exiſted. In a word, Mr. Foreſter was one of

thoſe men who, with every ſeeming requiſite for the diſcovery of important truth, are all their lives in ſubjection to the moſt contemptible prejudices.

The peculiarities of this gentleman's character were not undiſplayed in the ſcene to which he was now introduced. Having much kindneſs in his diſpoſition, he ſoon became deeply intereſted in the unhappineſs of his relation. He did every thing in his power to remove it; but his attempts were rude and unſkilful. He exhorted his hoſt to pluck up a ſpirit, and defy the foul fiend; but the tone of his exhortations found no ſympathetic chord in the mind of Mr. Falkland. The more he explained the articles of his creed, the more irreconcileable did they appear with thoſe of my maſter. He had not the ſkill to carry conviction to an underſtanding ſo well fortified in error; and the leſs ſo as the effort of his reflections had long been turned to a bold and intelligible enunciation of principles, rather than to analyſing the rudiments out of which they were formed. In a word, after a thouſand efforts of kindneſs to his entertainer, he drew off his forces, growling and diſſatisfied with his own impotence, rather than angry at the obſtinacy of Mr. Falkland. He felt no diminution of his affection for him, and was ſincerely grieved to find that he did him ſo little good. Both parties in this caſe did juſtice to the merits of the other; at the ſame time that the diſparity of their humours was ſuch as to prevent the ſtranger from being even a dangerous companion to the maſter of the houſe. They had ſcarcely any points of contact in their characters; Mr. Foreſter was incapable of giving Mr. Falkland that degree either of pain or pleaſure, which can raiſe the ſoul into a tumult and deprive it for a while of tranquillity and ſelf-command.

Our

Our viſitor was a man of an extremely communicative diſpoſition, and he began to feel himſelf painfully out of his element upon the preſent occaſion. Mr. Falkland was devoted to contemplation and ſolitude. He put upon himſelf ſome degree of reſtraint upon the arrival of his kinſman, though even then his darling habits would break out. But when they had ſeen each other a certain number of times, and it was ſufficiently evident that the ſociety of either would be a burthen rather than a pleaſure to the other, they conſented by a ſort of ſilent compact that each ſhould be at liberty to follow his own inclination. Mr. Falkland was in a certain ſenſe the greateſt gainer by this. He returned to the habits of his choice, and acted as nearly as poſſible juſt as he would have done if Mr. Foreſter had not been in exiſtence. But the latter was wholly at a loſs. He had all the diſadvantages of retirement, without being able, as he might have done at his houſe, to bring his own aſſociates or his own amuſements about him.

In this ſituation he caſt his eyes upon me. It was his principle to do every thing that his thoughts ſuggeſted, without caring for the forms of the world. He ſaw no reaſon why a peaſant, with certain advantages of education and opportunity, might not be as eligible a companion as a lord: at the ſame time that he was deeply impreſſed with the venerableneſs of old inſtitutions. Reduced as he was to a kind of laſt reſort, he found me better qualified for his purpoſe than any other perſon of Mr. Falkland's houſhold. My habitual ſimplicity was extremely agreeable to him: and, be it obſerved by the way, he loved to countenance the appearance of talents, while he profeſſed to be their enemy.

The manner in which he began this ſort of correſpondence was ſufficiently characteriſtical. It

was

was abrupt; but it was ſtrongly ſtamped with eſſential benevolence. It was blunt and humorous; but there was attractiveneſs, eſpecially in a caſe of unequal intercourſe, in that very ruſticity by which he levelled himſelf with the great bulk of his ſpecies. He had to reconcile himſelf, as well as to invite me; not to reconcile himſelf to the poſtponing an ariſtocratical vanity, for of that he had a very ſlender portion, but to the trouble of invitation, for he loved his eaſe. All this produced ſome irregularity and indeciſion in his own mind, and gave a very whimſical impreſſion to his behaviour.

On my part I was by no means ungrateful for the diſtinction that was paid me. My mind had been relaxed into temporary dejection, but my reſerve had no alloy of moroſeneſs or inſenſibility. It did not long hold out againſt the condeſcending attentions of Mr. Foreſter. I became gradually heedful, encouraged, confiding. I had a moſt eager thirſt for the knowledge of mankind; and, though no perſon perhaps ever purchaſed ſo dearly the inſtructions he received in that ſchool, the inclination was in no degree diminiſhed. Mr. Foreſter was the ſecond man I had ſeen who ſeemed almoſt as much worth being ſtudied as Mr. Falkland himſelf. I was glad to eſcape from the uneaſineſs of my thoughts; and, while engaged with this new friend, I forgot the criticalneſs of the evils with which I was hourly menaced.

Stimulated by theſe feelings on either part we were never at a loſs for ſubjects of converſation. The obſervations Mr. Foreſter had made in his travels, the ſet of opinions he had formed to himſelf, all amuſed and intereſted me. His manner of telling a ſtory or explaining his thoughts was forcible, perſpicuous and original: his ſtyle in converſation had an uncommon zeſt, which, while it

ſeemed

ſeemed to diſdain ornament, was unconſciouſly interſperſed with the boldeſt figures; and often wandered into all the vehemence of oratory, while it affected to be blunt, ſimple, and abrupt. Nor was the part I ſuſtained upon theſe occaſions without its recommendations. I received the communications of my friend with an ingenuous and unprejudiced mind. If I objected to any of his views, my objections were not drawn from the ſtores of common place, and had therefore the grace of novelty. And I may venture to ſay that my objections depended more for effect upon their inherent value, than upon any poſitiveneſs and parade with which they were announced.

Mr. Falkland was deſtined to be for ever unhappy; and it ſeemed as if no new incident could occur from which he was not able to extract food for this imperious propenſity. He was wearied with a perpetual repetition of ſimilar impreſſions, and entertained an invincible diſguſt againſt all that was new. The viſit of Mr. Foreſter he regarded with antipathy. He was ſcarcely able to look at him without ſhuddering; an emotion which his gueſt perceived, and pitied as the reſult of habit and diſeaſe rather than of judgment. None of his actions paſſed unremarked; the moſt indifferent excited uneaſineſs and apprehenſion. No ſooner had the firſt overtures of a ſort of intimacy between me and Mr. Foreſter taken place, than they probably gave birth to ſentiments of jealouſy in the mind of my maſter. It was not long before he intimated to me that it would not be agreeable to him that there ſhould be too much intercourſe between me and his viſitor.

What could I do? Young as I was, could it be expected that I ſhould play the philoſopher, and put a perpetual curb upon my inclinations? Imprudent though I had been, could I voluntarily

ſubject

ſubject myſelf to an eternal penance, and eſtrangement from human ſociety? Could I diſcourage a frankneſs ſo perfectly in conſonance with my wiſhes, and receive in an ungracious way a kindneſs that ſtole away my heart?

Beſide this, I was but ill prepared for the ſervile ſubmiſſion Mr. Falkland demanded. In early life I was accuſtomed to be much my own maſter. When I firſt entered into Mr. Falkland's ſervice, my perſonal habits were checked by the novelty of my ſituation, and my affections were gained by the high accompliſhments of my patron. To novelty and its influence, curioſity had immediately ſucceeded. Curioſity, ſo long as it laſted, was a principle ſtronger in my boſom than even the love of independence. To that I would have ſacrificed my liberty or my life; I would have ſubmitted to the condition of a Weſt Indian Negro, or to the tortures inflicted by North American ſavages. But the turbulence of curioſity had now ſubſided.

As long as the threats of Mr. Falkland had been confined to generals, I endured it. I was conſcious of the unbecoming action I had committed, and this rendered me humble. But, when he went farther, and undertook to preſcribe to every article of my conduct, my patience was at an end. He ſtretched his power beyond the limits of policy and prudence, and thus brought its very exiſtence into queſtion. I believed that nothing which his rage irritated by the moſt open rebellion could inflict, would be worſe than the ſlavery he now pretended to impoſe. I had been adventurous in the gratification of an infantine and unreaſonable curioſity, and I was reſolved not to be leſs adventurous, if need were, in the defence of every thing that can make life a bleſſing. I was prepared for an amicable adjuſtment of intereſts; I would undertake that Mr. Falkland ſhould never ſuſtain injury through my

my means; but I expected in return that I ſhould ſuffer no incroachment, but be left to the direction of my own underſtanding.

I went on then to ſeek Mr. Foreſter's ſociety with eagerneſs; and it is the nature of an intercourſe that does not decline, progreſſively to increaſe. Mr. Falkland obſerved theſe ſymptoms with viſible perturbation. Whenever I was conſcious of their being perceived by him, I betrayed tokens of confuſion; this did not tend to allay his uneaſineſs. One day he drew me aſide; and, with a look of myſterious, but terrible import, addreſſed me thus:

Young man, take warning! Perhaps this is the laſt time you ſhall have an opportunity to take it! I will not always be the butt of your ſimplicity and inexperience, nor ſuffer your weakneſs to triumph over my ſtrength! Why do you trifle with me? You little ſuſpect the extent of my power. At this moment you are ſurrounded with the engines of my vengeance, and before you are aware they will cloſe upon you. You might as well think of eſcaping from the reach of the omnipreſent God, as from mine! If you could touch ſo much as my finger, you ſhould expiate it in hours and months and years of a torment of which as yet you have not the remoteſt idea! Remember! I am not talking at random! I do not utter a word, that, if you provoke me, ſhall not be executed to the ſevereſt letter!

It may be ſuppoſed that theſe menaces were not without their effect. I withdrew in ſilence. My whole ſoul revolted againſt the treatment I endured, and yet I could not utter a word. Why could not I ſpeak the expoſtulations of my heart, or propoſe the compromiſe I meditated? It was inexperience, and not want of ſtrength, that awed me. Every act of Mr. Falkland contained ſomething of new, and I was unprepared to meet it.

Perhaps it will be found that the greateſt hero owes the propriety of his conduct to the habit of encountering difficulties and calling out with promptneſs the energies of his mind.

I contemplated the proceedings of my maſter with the deepeſt aſtoniſhment. Humanity and general kindneſs were fundamental parts of his character, but in relation to me they were ſterile and inactive. His own intereſt required that he ſhould purchaſe my kindneſs; but he preferred to govern me by terror, and watch me with unceaſing anxiety. I ruminated with the moſt mournful ſenſations upon the nature of my calamity. I believed that no human being was ever placed in a ſituation ſo pitiable as mine. Every atom of my frame ſeemed to have a ſeveral exiſtence, and to crawl within me. I had but too much reaſon indeed to believe that Mr. Falkland's were not empty words. I knew his ability; I felt his aſcendancy. If I encountered him, what chance had I of victory? If I were defeated, what was the penalty I had to ſuffer? Well then, the reſt of my life muſt be devoted to ſlaviſh ſubjection? Miſerable ſentence! And, if it were, what ſecurity have I againſt the injuſtice of a man, vigilant, capricious and criminal? I envied the condemned wretch upon the ſcaffold. I envied the victim of the inquiſition in the midſt of his torture. They know what they have to ſuffer. I have only to imagine every thing terrible, and then ſay, The fate reſerved for me is worſe than this!

It was well for me that theſe ſenſations were but tranſient: human nature could not long ſupport itſelf under what I then felt. By degrees my mind ſhook off its burthen. Indignation ſucceeded to emotions of terror. The hoſtility of Mr. Falkland excited hoſtility in me. I was determined I would never calumniate him in matters of the moſt trivial import;

import; much leſs betray the grand ſecret upon which every thing dear to him depended. But, totally abjuring the offenſive, I reſolved to ſtand firmly upon the defenſive. The liberty of acting as I pleaſed I would preſerve at whatever riſque. If I were worſted in the conteſt, I would at leaſt have the conſolation of reflecting that I had exerted myſelf with energy. In proportion as I thus determined, I drew off my forces from petty incurſions, and felt the propriety of acting with premeditation and ſyſtem. I ruminated inceſſantly upon plans of deliverance, but I was anxious that my choice ſhould not be precipitately made.

It was during this period of my deliberation and uncertainty that Mr. Foreſter terminated his viſit. He obſerved a ſtrange diſtance in my behaviour, and in his good-natured, encouraging way chid me for it. I could only anſwer with a gloomy look of myſterious import, and a mournful and expreſſive ſilence. He ſought me for an explanation, but I was now as ingenious in avoiding, as I had before been ardent to ſeek him; and he quitted our houſe, as he afterwards told me, with an impreſſion, that there was ſome ill deſtiny that hung over it, that ſeemed fated to make all its inhabitants miſerable, without its being poſſible for a by-ſtander to penetrate the reaſon.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

MR. Foreſter had left us about three weeks, when Mr. Falkland ſent me upon ſome buſineſs to an eſtate he poſſeſſed in a neighbouring county about fifty miles from his principal reſidence. The road led in a direction wholly wide of the habitation of our late viſitor. I was upon my return from the place to which I had been ſent, when I began in fancy to take a ſurvey of the various circumſtances of my condition, and by degrees loſt in the profoundneſs of my contemplation all attention to the ſurrounding objects. The firſt determination of my mind was to eſcape from the lynx-eyed jealouſy and deſpotiſm of Mr. Falkland; the ſecond to provide, by every effort of prudence and deliberation I could deviſe, againſt the danger with which I well knew my attempt muſt be accompanied.

Occupied with theſe meditations, I rode many miles before I perceived that I had totally deviated from the right path. At length I rouſed myſelf, and ſurveyed the horizon round me; but I could obſerve nothing with which my organ was previouſly acquainted. On three ſides the heath ſtretched as far as the eye could reach; on the fourth I diſcovered at ſome diſtance a wood of no ordinary dimenſions. Before me ſcarcely a ſingle track could be found to mark that any human being had ever viſited the ſpot. As the beſt expedient I could deviſe, I bent my courſe towards the wood I have mentioned, and then purſued as well as I

was

was able the windings of the incloſure. This led me after ſome time to the end of the heath, but I was ſtill as much at a loſs as ever reſpecting the road I ſhould purſue. The ſun was hid from me by a grey and cloudy atmoſphere; I was induced to continue along the ſkirts of the wood, and ſurmounted with ſome difficulty the hedges and other obſtacles that from time to time preſented themſelves. My thoughts were gloomy and diſconſolate; the drearineſs of the day and the ſolitude which ſurrounded me ſeemed to communicate a ſadneſs to my ſoul. I had proceeded a conſiderable way, and was quite overcome with hunger and fatigue, when I diſcovered a road and a little inn at no great diſtance. I made up to them, and upon enquiry found that, inſtead of purſuing the proper direction, I had taken one that led to Mr. Foreſter's, rather than to my own habitation. I alighted, and was entering the houſe, when the appearance of that gentleman ſtruck my eyes.

Mr. Foreſter accoſted me with kindneſs, invited me into the room where he had been ſitting, and enquired what accident had brought me to that place. While he was ſpeaking, I could not help recollecting the extraordinary manner in which we were thus once more brought together, and a train of ideas was by this means ſuggeſted to my mind. Some refreſhment was by Mr. Foreſter's order prepared for me; I ſat down and partook of it. Still this thought dwelt upon my recollection:——Mr. Falkland would never be made acquainted with our meeting; I had an opportunity thrown in my way, which if I did not improve, I ſhould deſerve all the conſequences that might reſult. I could now converſe with a friend, and a powerful friend, without fear of being watched and overlooked. What wonder that I was tempted to diſcloſe, not Mr. Falkland's ſecret, but my own ſituation, and

receive

receive the advice of a man of worth and experience, which might perhaps be adequately done without entering into any detail injurious to my maſter?

Mr. Foreſter was forward on his part, to learn why it was that I thought myſelf unhappy, and why I had avoided him during the latter part of his reſidence under the ſame roof, as evidently as I had before taken pleaſure in his communications. I told him that I could give him but an imperfect ſatisfaction upon theſe points, but what I could I would willingly explain. The fact, I proceeded, was, that there were certain reaſons which rendered it impoſſible for me to have a tranquil moment under the roof of Mr. Falkland. I had revolved the matter again and again in my mind, and was finally convinced that I owed it to myſelf to withdraw from his ſervice. I added, that I was ſenſible by this half confidence I might rather ſeem to merit the diſapprobation of Mr. Foreſter than his countenance; but I declared my perſuaſion that, if he could be acquainted with the whole affair, however ſtrange my behaviour might at preſent appear, he would applaud my reſerve.

He aſked what reaſon I had to complain of Mr. Falkland? I replied, that I entertained the deepeſt reverence for my maſter; I admired his abilities, and conſidered him as formed for the benefit of his ſpecies. I ſhould in my own opinion be the vileſt of miſcreants, if I uttered a whiſper to his diſadvantage. But all this did not avail: I was not fit for him; perhaps I was not good enough for him; at all events I muſt be perpetually miſerable ſo long as I continued to live with him.

I obſerved Mr. Foreſter gaze upon me eagerly with curioſity and ſurpriſe, but this circumſtance I

did

did not think proper to notice. Having recovered himſelf, he aſked, Why then, that being the caſe, I did not quit his ſervice? I anſwered, What he now touched upon was that which moſt of all contributed to my misfortune. Mr. Falkland was not ignorant of my diſlike to my preſent ſituation; perhaps he thought it unreaſonable, unjuſt; but I knew that he would never be brought to conſent to my giving way to it.

Here Mr. Foreſter interrupted me: and, ſmiling, ſaid, I magnified obſtacles, and overrated my own importance, adding that he would undertake to remove that difficulty, as well as to provide me with a more agreeable appointment. This ſuggeſtion produced in me a ſerious alarm. I replied, that I muſt intreat him upon no account to think of applying to Mr. Falkland upon the ſubject. I added, that perhaps I was only betraying my own imbecility; but in reality, unacquainted as I was with experience and the world, I was afraid, though diſguſted with my preſent reſidence, to expoſe myſelf upon a mere project of my own, to the reſentment of ſo conſiderable a man as Mr. Falkland. If he would favour me with his advice upon the ſubject, or if he would only give me leave to hope for his protection in caſe of any unforeſeen accident, this was all I preſumed to requeſt; and, thus encouraged, I would venture to obey the dictates of my inclination, and fly in purſuit of my loſt tranquillity.

Having thus opened myſelf to this generous friend as far as I could do it with propriety and ſafety, he ſat for ſome time ſilent with an air of deep reflection. At length with a countenance of unuſual ſeverity he thus addreſſed me: Young man, I am afraid you are ignorant of the nature of the tale you have been telling me. There is myſtery in it; there is ſomething you cannot prevail upon

upon yourſelf to diſcloſe. Myſtery always implies ſomewhere or other an uncommon portion of wrong; what am I to think of you? Are you aware of the prejudice you are voluntarily creating againſt yourſelf thus upon the threſhold of life?

I anſwered that, whatever were the amount of that prejudice, I muſt ſubmit. I placed my hope of a candid conſtruction in the preſent inſtance, in the rectitude of his nature.

He went on: Well, be it as you pleaſe. It was abſolutely neceſſary I ſhould tell you what you were doing. I am in ſome reſpects the worſt perſon you could have applied to under theſe circumſtances. I am the idolator of frankneſs, and have an unconquerable abhorrence to every thing that is the reverſe of it. If any body had told me ſix months ago that I could have been brought to countenance a perſon that practiſed that reverſe, I ſhould not have believed him. But I will tell you fairly the ſtate of my mind. Your conduct in this reſpect has not, as yet at leaſt, deſtroyed the early predilection I conceived in your favour. The balance, ſo far as I am able at preſent to adjuſt it, is with you. I will therefore, though in total oppoſition to my principles, yield to this inſtigation. I put myſelf into your hands; I will do exactly what you require. I will receive you either now or hereafter under my own roof, truſting that you will not deceive my confidence, and that I ſhall find unfavourable appearances ultimately terminating as the man moſt ſolicitous for your welfare would deſire.

We were engaged in the earneſt diſcuſſion of ſubjects thus intereſting to my peace, when we were interrupted by an event of all others the moſt ſeriouſly to be deprecated. Without the ſmalleſt notice, and as if he had dropped upon us from the clouds, Mr. Falkland burſt into the room. I found afterwards

afterwards that Mr. Foreſter had come thus far upon an appointment to meet Mr. Falkland, and that the place of their intended rendezvous was the next ſtage. Mr. Foreſter was detained unexpectedly at the inn where we now were, by our accidental rencounter, and in reality had for the moment forgotten his appointment; while Mr. Falkland, not finding him where he expected, had proceeded thus far towards the houſe of his kinſman. To me the meeting was the moſt unaccountable in the world.

I inſtantly foreſaw the dreadful complication of misfortune that was included in this event. To Mr. Falkland the meeting between me and his relation muſt appear, not accidental, but concerted. I was totally out of the road I had been travelling by his direction; I was in a road that led directly to the houſe of Mr. Foreſter. What muſt he think of this? How muſt he ſuppoſe I came to that place? The truth, if told, that I came there without deſign, and purely in conſequence of having loſt my way, muſt appear to be the moſt impudent lie that ever was deviſed.

Here then I ſtood detected in the fact of that intercourſe which had been ſo ſeverely forbidden. But in this inſtance it was infinitely worſe, than in thoſe which had already given ſo much diſturbance to Mr. Falkland. It was then open, frank and unconcealed; and therefore the preſumption was that it was for purpoſes that required no concealment. But the preſent interview, if concerted, was in the moſt emphatical degree clandeſtine. Nor was it leſs perilous than it was clandeſtine. It had been forbidden with the moſt dreadful menaces, and Mr. Falkland was not ignorant how deep an impreſſion thoſe menaces had made upon my imagination. Such a meeting therefore could not have been concerted under ſuch circumſtances for a trivial

vial purpoſe, or for any purpoſe that his heart did not quake to think of. Such was the amount of my crime; ſuch was the agony my appearance was calculated to inſpire; and it was reaſonable to ſuppoſe that the penalty I had to expect would be proportionable. The threats of Mr. Falkland ſtill ſounded in my ears, and I was in a tranſport of terror.

The conduct of the ſame man in different circumſtances is often ſo various as to render it very difficult to be accounted for. Mr. Falkland, in this to him terrible criſis, did not ſeem to be in any degree hurried away by his paſſions. For a moment he was dumb, his eyes glared with aſtoniſhment; and the next moment as it were, he had the moſt perfect calmneſs and ſelf-command. Had it been otherwiſe I have no doubt that I ſhould inſtantly have entered into an explanation, the ingenuouſneſs and conſiſtency of which could not but have been in ſome degree attended with a favourable event. But as it was, I ſuffered myſelf to be overcome; I yielded as in a former inſtance to the diſcomfiting influence of ſurpriſe. I dared ſcarcely breathe; I obſerved the appearances with anxiety and wonder. Mr. Falkland quietly ordered me to return home, and take along with me the groom he had brought with him. I obeyed in ſilence.

I afterwards underſtood that he enquired minutely of Mr. Foreſter the circumſtances of our meeting, and that that gentleman, perceiving that the meeting itſelf was diſcovered, and guided by habits of frankneſs, which, when once rooted in a character, it is very difficult to counteract, told Mr. Falkland every thing that had paſſed, together with the remarks it had ſuggeſted to his own mind. Mr. Falkland received the communication with an ambiguous and ſtudied ſilence, which by no means operated to my advantage in the already-poiſoned mind

mind of Mr. Foreſter. His ſilence was partly the direct conſequence of a mind watchful, inquiſitive and doubting; and partly perhaps was adopted for the ſake of the effect it was qualified to produce, Mr. Falkland not being unwilling to encourage a prejudice againſt the character of a perſon who might one day become the adverſary of his own.

As to me, I went home indeed, for this was not a moment to reſiſt. Mr. Falkland, with a premeditation to which he had artfully given the appearance of accident, had taken care to ſend with me a guard to attend upon his priſoner. I ſeemed as if conducting to one of thoſe fortreſſes, famed in the hiſtory of deſpotiſm, from which the wretched victim is never known to eſcape; and, when I entered my chamber, I felt as if I were entering a dungeon. I reflected that I was at the mercy of a man, exaſperated at my diſobedience, and who was already formed to cruelty by ſucceſſive murders. I had occaſionally indulged in viſions of pleaſure, authority and honour as the attendants of my maturer years: who has not? eſpecially who, with an imagination as buſy and a ſpirit as ardent as mine? All theſe proſpects were now cloſed; I was cut off for ever from purſuits that I had meditated with ineffable delight; my death might be the event of a few hours. I was a victim at the ſhrine of conſcious guilt that knew neither reſt nor ſatiety; I ſhould be blotted from the catalogue of the living, and my fate remain eternally a ſecret; the man who added my murder to his former crimes, would ſhow himſelf the next morning, and be hailed with the admiration and applauſe of his ſpecies.

In the midſt of theſe terrible imaginations one idea preſented itſelf that alleviated my feelings. This was the recollection of the ſtrange and unaccountable tranquillity which Mr. Falkland had manifeſted

manifeſted, when he diſcovered me in company with Mr. Foreſter. I was not deceived by this. I knew full well that this calm was temporary, and would be ſucceeded by a tumult and whirlwind of the paſſions of the moſt dreadful ſort. But a man under the power of ſuch terrors as now occupied me, catches at every reed. I ſaid to myſelf, that this tranquillity was a period it was incumbent upon me to improve; and the ſhorter its duration might be found, the more ſpeedy was I obliged to be in the uſe of it. I could not endure the thought that the apprehenſions I now entertained, ſhould be realiſed through the neglect of any exertion or even daring on my part. In a word, I took the reſolution, becauſe I already ſtood in fear of the vengeance of Mr. Falkland, to riſque the poſſibility of provoking it in a degree ſtill more inexpiable, and terminate at once my preſent ſtate of uncertainty. Add to which, I had now opened my caſe to Mr. Foreſter, and he had given me poſitive aſſurances of his protection. This in the preſent deſperation of my fortune was an idea to which my mind willingly had recourſe for ſupport and conſolation.—Inſtigated by theſe reflections, I ſat down to addreſs the following letter to Mr. Falkland.

SIR,

I have conceived the intention of quitting your ſervice. This is a meaſure we ought both of us to deſire. I ſhall then be, what it is my duty to be, the maſter of my own actions. You will be delivered from the preſence of a perſon, whom you cannot prevail upon yourſelf to behold without unpleaſing emotions.

Why

Why ſhould you ſubject me to an eternal penance? Why ſhould you conſign all my youthful hopes to ſuffering and deſpair? Conſult the principles of humanity that have marked the general courſe of your proceedings, and do not let me, I intreat you, be made the ſubject of a uſeleſs ſeverity. My heart is impreſſed with gratitude for your favours. I ſincerely aſk your forgiveneſs for the many errors of my conduct. I conſider the treatment I have received under your roof as one almoſt uninterrupted ſcene of kindneſs and generoſity. I ſhall never forget my obligations to you, and will never betray them.

I remain, SIR,

Your moſt grateful, reſpectful

and dutiful ſervant,

CALEB WILLIAMS.

Such was my employment of the evening of a day, which will be ever memorable in the hiſtory of my life. Mr. Falkland not being yet returned, though expected every hour, I was induced to make uſe of the pretext of fatigue to avoid an interview. I went to bed. The next morning I was informed, that he did not come home till late, that he had enquired for me, and being told that I was in bed, had ſaid nothing farther upon the ſubject. Satisfied in this reſpect, I went to the breakfaſting parlour, and buſied myſelf for ſome time in arranging a few books and ſome other little occupations, till Mr. Falkland ſhould appear. After a little time I heard his ſtep, which I perfectly knew how to diſtinguiſh, in the paſſage. Preſently, he ſtopped, and, ſpeaking to ſome one in a ſort of deliberate, but ſmothered voice, I overheard him repeat my name

name as enquiring for me. In conformity to the plan I had perſuaded myſelf to adopt, I now laid the letter I had written upon the table, near where he uſually ſat, and made my exit at one door as Mr. Falkland entered at the other. This done, I withdrew in expectation of the event to a private apartment, a ſort of light-cloſet at the end of the library, where I was accuſtomed not unfrequently to ſit.

I had not been here three minutes when I heard the voice of Mr. Falkland calling me. I went to him in the library. That is your letter, ſaid he, throwing it. His manner was that of a man labouring with ſome dreadful thought, and endeavouring to give an air of careleſſneſs and inſenſibility to his behaviour. I think no carriage of any other ſort could have produced a ſenſation of ſuch inexplicable horror, or have excited in the perſon who was moſt immediately its object, ſuch an alarm for the event.

My lad, continued he, I believe now you have played almoſt all your tricks, and, damn me, if the farce be not nearly at an end! With your apiſhneſs and abſurdity however you have taught me one thing, and, whereas before now I have winced at them with torture, I am now as tough as an elephant. I ſhall cruſh you in the end with the ſame indifference that I would any other little inſect that diſturbed my ſerenity.

I believe you have decided your fate. I think myſelf ſure that you will never have done till you have brought my whole weight upon you. You may try however. Your only chance is in paſſiveneſs. I am now perfectly inſenſible to every thing you can ſuffer, but I have no pleaſure in it. I will let you alone, if I can.

I am

I am unable to tell what brought about your meeting with Mr. Foreſter yeſterday. It might be deſign; it might be accident. But, be it which it will, I ſhall not forget it. You write me here, that you are deſirous to quit my ſervice. To that I have a ſhort anſwer, You ſhall never quit it with life. If you attempt it, you ſhall never ceaſe to rue your folly as long as you exiſt. That is my will; and I will not have it reſiſted. The very next time you diſobey me in that or any other article, there is an end of your vagaries for ever. Perhaps your ſituation may be a pitiable one; it is for you to look to that. I only know that it is in your power to prevent its growing worſe; no time nor chance ſhall ever make it better.

Do not imagine I am afraid of you! I wear an armour, againſt which all your weapons are impotent. I have dug a pit for you; and, whichever way you move, backward or forward, to the right or to the left, it is ready to ſwallow you. Be ſtill! If once you fall, call as loud as you will, no man on earth ſhall hear your cries; prepare a tale ever ſo plauſible, or ever ſo true, the whole world ſhall execrate you as an impoſtor. Your innocence ſhall be of no ſervice to you; I laugh at ſo feeble a defence. It is I that ſay it; you may believe what I tell you. Do you not know, miſerable wretch! added he, ſuddenly altering his tone, and ſtamping upon the ground with fury, that I have ſworn to preſerve my reputation at whatever expence, that I love it more than the whole world and its inhabitants taken together? And do you think that you ſhall wound it? Begone, miſcreant! reptile! and ceaſe to contend with unſurmountable power!

The part of my hiſtory which I am now relating is that which I reflect upon with the leaſt complacency.

cency. Why was it that I was once more totally overcome by the imperious carriage of Mr. Falkland, and unable to utter a word? The reader will be preſented with many occaſions in the ſequel in which I wanted neither facility in the invention of expedients, nor fortitude in entering upon my juſtification. Perſecution at length gave firmneſs to my character, and taught me the better part of manhood. But in the preſent inſtance I was irreſolute, overawed and abaſhed.

The ſpeech I had heard was the dictate of frenzy, and it created in me a ſimilar frenzy. It determined me to do the very thing againſt which I was thus ſolemnly warned, and fly from my maſter's houſe. I could not enter into parley with him; I could no longer endure the vile ſubjugation he impoſed on me. It was in vain that my reaſon came to my aid, and warned me of the raſhneſs of a meaſure to be taken without concert or preparation. I ſeemed to be in a ſtate in which reaſon had no power. I felt as if I could coolly ſurvey the ſeveral arguments of the caſe, perceive that they had prudence, truth and common ſenſe on their ſide: and then anſwer, I am under the guidance of a director more energetic than you.

I was not long in executing what I had thus rapidly determined. I fixed on the evening of that very day as the period of my evaſion. Even in this ſhort interval I had perhaps ſufficient time for deliberation. But all opportunity was uſeleſs to me; my mind was fixed, and each ſucceeding moment only increaſed the unſpeakable eagerneſs with which I meditated my eſcape. The hours uſually obſerved by our family in this country reſidence were regular; and one in the morning was the time I ſelected for my undertaking. I ſtole down quietly from my chamber with a lamp in my hand; I went

I went along a paſſage that led to a ſmall door opening into the garden, and then croſſed the garden to a gate that interſected an elm walk and a private horſe-path on the outſide.

I could ſcarcely believe my good-fortune in having thus far executed my deſign without interruption. The terrible images Mr. Falkland's menaces had ſuggeſted to my mind, made me expect impediment and detection at every ſtep, though the impaſſioned ſtate of my mind impelled me to advance with deſperate reſolution. I drew a favourable omen as to the final reſult of my project, from the deſirable event which had attended me in the outſet.

CHAP. XXI.

THE firſt plan that had ſuggeſted itſelf to me was, to go to the neareſt public road, and take the earlieſt ſtage for London. There I believed I ſhould be moſt ſafe from diſcovery, if the vengeance of Mr. Falkland ſhould prompt him to purſue me; and I did not doubt, among the multiplied reſources of the metropolis, to find ſomething which ſhould ſuggeſt to me an eligible mode of diſpoſing of my perſon and induſtry. I reſerved Mr. Foreſter in my arrangement as a laſt reſource, not to be called forth unleſs for immediate protection from the hand of perſecution and power.

The mode of my proceeding being thus far digeſted, I traced with a chearful heart the unfrequented path it was now neceſſary for me to purſue. The night was gloomy, and it drizzled with rain. But theſe were circumſtances I had ſcarcely the power to perceive; all was ſunſhine and joy within me. I hardly felt the ground; I repeated to myſelf a thouſand times, I am free. What concern have I with danger and alarm; I feel that I am free; I feel that I will continue ſo. What power is able to hold in chains a mind ardent and determined? What power can cauſe that man to die, whoſe whole ſoul commands him to continue to live? I looked back with abhorrence to the ſubjection in which I had been held. I did not hate the author of my misfortunes; truth and juſtice acquit me of that; I rather pitied the hard deſtiny

to

to which he ſeemed condemned. But I thought with unſpeakable loathing of thoſe errors, in conſequence of which every man is fated to be more or leſs the tyrant or the ſlave. I was aſtoniſhed at the folly of my ſpecies, that they did not riſe up as one man, and ſhake off chains ſo ignominious and miſery ſo inſupportable. So far as related to myſelf, I reſolved, and this reſolution has never been entirely forgotten by me, to hold myſelf diſengaged from the odious ſcene, and never fill the part either of the oppreſſor or the ſufferer.

My mind continued in this enthuſiaſtical ſtate, full of confidence, and acceſſible only to ſuch a portion of fear as ſerved rather to keep up a ſtate of pleaſurable emotion, than to generate anguiſh and diſtreſs, during the whole of this nocturnal expedition. After a walk of three hours I arrived without accident at the village from which I hoped to have taken my paſſage for the metropolis. At this early hour every thing was quiet; no ſound of any thing human ſaluted my ear. It was with difficulty that I gained admittance into the yard of the inn, where I found a ſingle oſtler taking care of ſome horſes. From him I received the unwelcome tidings that the coach was not expected till ſix o'clock in the morning of the following day, its route through that town recurring only three times a-week.

This intelligence gave the firſt check to the rapturous inebriation by which my mind had been poſſeſſed from the moment I quitted the habitation of Mr. Falkland. The whole of my fortune in ready caſh conſiſted of about eleven guineas. I had about fifty more that had fallen to me from the diſpoſal of my property at the death of my father; but that was ſo veſted as to preclude it from immediate uſe, and I even doubted whether it would not be found better

better ultimately to reſign it, than by claiming it to riſk the furniſhing a clue to what I moſt of all dreaded to incur, the perſecution of Mr. Falkland. There was nothing I ſo ardently deſired as the annihilation of all future intercourſe between us, that he ſhould not know there was ſuch a perſon on the earth as myſelf, and that I ſhould never more hear the name of my quondam maſter.

Thus circumſtanced, I conceived frugality to be an object by no means unworthy of my attention, unable as I was to prognoſticate what diſcouragements and delays might preſent themſelves to the accompliſhment of my wiſhes, after my arrival in London. For this and other reaſons I determined to adhere to my deſign of travelling by the ſtage; it only remaining for me to conſider in what manner I ſhould prevent the eventual delay of twenty-four hours from becoming by any untoward event a ſource of new calamity. It was by no means adviſable to remain at the village where I now was, during this interval; nor did I even think it proper to employ it in proceeding on foot along the great road. I therefore decided upon making a circuit, the direction of which ſhould ſeem at firſt extremely wide of my intended route, and then ſuddenly ſtriking into a different path ſhould enable me to arrive by the cloſe of day at a market-town twelve miles nearer to the metropolis.

Having fixed the economy of the day, and perſuaded myſelf that it was the beſt which under the circumſtances could be adopted, I diſmiſſed for the moſt part all farther anxieties from my mind, and eagerly yielded myſelf up to the different amuſements that aroſe. I reſted and went forward at the impulſe of the moment. At one time I reclined upon a bank immerſed in contemplation, and at another exerted myſelf to analyſe the proſpects

which

which ſucceeded each other. The hazineſs of the morning was followed by a ſpirit-ſtirring and beautiful day. With the ductility ſo characteriſtic of a youthful mind, I forgot the anguiſh which had lately been my continual gueſt, and occupied myſelf entirely in dreams of future novelty and felicity. I ſcarcely ever in the whole courſe of my exiſtence ſpent a day of more various or exquiſite gratification. It furniſhed a ſtrong and perhaps not an unſalutary contraſt to the terrors which had preceded, and the dreadful ſcenes that awaited me.

In the evening I arrived at the place of my deſtination, enquired for the inn at which the coach was accuſtomed to call, and ordered myſelf refreſhment and a bed. I had not been long here, before, having occaſion to croſs the inn yard upon ſome occaſion, juſt as I was going again to enter the houſe I ſaw one of Mr. Falkland's footmen riding into the gate-way. I had no doubt that I was myſelf the object of his journey. But it was too late to think of avoiding his obſervation; he was almoſt upon me before I ſaw him. Every incident connected with my late abhorred ſituation was calculated to impreſs me with the deepeſt alarm. My firſt thought was to betake myſelf to the fields, and truſt to the ſwiftneſs of my flight for ſafety. But I preſently remarked that he was alone; and I believed that it would be diſgraceful to fly, when, man to man, I might reaſonably hope I could at any time get the better, either by the firmneſs of my determination, or the ſubtlety of my invention.

Thus determined, I came up to him as he alighted from his horſe and bade him follow into the room where I had been ſitting. Well, Thomas, ſaid I, I gueſs your errand; but it is to no purpoſe. You come to conduct me back to Falkland Houſe; but no force ſhall ever drag me to that place alive. I

have not taken my reſolution without great conſideration and ſtrong reaſons; and, having taken it, all the world ſhall never perſuade me to alter. I am an Engliſhman; and it is the privilege of an Engliſhman to be ſole judge and maſter of his own actions.

Why, maſter Williams, replied Thomas, to be ſure you ſhould know beſt what you are about. We are all at a ſtound, as a man may ſay, to think what you have got in your head. But that is none of my buſineſs. Sure enough the ſquire expects you to go back with me; but I have a letter for you, and mayhap when you have read that, you may come off from a little of your ſtoutneſs. For my part I knew poor farmer Williams, your father, theſe many a day, and I ſhould be main loth for his ſake and your own too, that you ſhould come to any ſorrow.

Thus ſaying, he gave me his letter, which was from Mr. Foreſter, whom, as he told me, he had left at my maſter's houſe. It was as follows:

WILLIAMS,

My brother Falkland has ſent his man Thomas in purſuit of you. He expects that, if found, you will return with him. I expect ſo too. It is of the utmoſt conſequence to your future honour and character. After reading theſe lines, if you are a villain and a raſcal, you will perhaps endeavour to fly. If your conſcience tells you, You are innocent, you will out of all doubt come back. Let me know whether I have been your dupe; and whether, while I was won over by your ſeeming ingenuity, I was the tool of a deſigning knave. If you come, I pledge myſelf that, if you clear your reputation, you ſhall not only be free to go wherever you pleaſe, but ſhall receive every aſſiſt-

ance

ance it is in my power to give. Remember! I engage for nothing farther than that.

VALENTINE FORESTER.

What a letter was this? To a mind like mine glowing with the love of virtue, ſuch an addreſs was ſtrong enough to draw the perſon to whom it was addreſſed from one end of the earth to the other. Priſons, racks and gibbets would have ſhrunk into nothing in compariſon with it. The ideas it ſuggeſted had a tendency to fill the mind, and ſhut out the poſſibility of competition.

I repaſſed in my thoughts every memorable incident that had happened to me under the roof of Mr. Falkland. I could recollect nothing, except the affair of the myſterious cheſt, out of which the ſhadow of an accuſation of the nature alluded to in Mr. Foreſter's letter could be extorted. In that inſtance no doubt my conduct had been highly reprehenſible, and I had never looked back upon it without remorſe and ſelf-condemnation. But I did not believe that it was of the nature of thoſe actions which can be brought under legal cenſure. I ſtill leſs could perſuade myſelf to believe, that Mr. Falkland, who ſhuddered at the very poſſibility of his own detection, and who conſidered himſelf as completely in my power, would dare to bring forward a ſubject ſo cloſely connected with that topic, which wakened eternal agony in his ſoul. In a word, the more I reflected on the phraſes of Mr. Foreſter's billet, the leſs could I imagine the nature of thoſe ſcenes to which they were to ſerve as a prelude.

The inſcrutableneſs however of the myſtery they contained was by no means calculated to mitigate my apprehenſions. It ſerved on the contrary to give new pungency to my alarm. It overwhelmed every

every quality of my mind; except my fortitude. What reſources had not my perſecutor at his command? It was now that I began to fear him. All the apprehenſions that had before haunted my mind ſeemed, in compariſon with what I now felt, like the gambols of children. But what could I do? This was an enemy to face and not to fly. Tear me to pieces, exclaimed I, tremendous and incomprehenſible genius! hang up this miſerable carcaſs to writhe beneath a burning ſun! inflict upon me unheard of and lingering tortures!—that in ſome part or other of the earth you might do! But my good name ſhall never be your victim! I will be heard; I will be underſtood! All the arts of hell ſhall not prevent that! I may be unfortunate; but my very perſecutors ſhall confeſs my innocence!

Thomas, ſaid I, after a conſiderable interval ſpent in ſilence, to my attendant, You are right. This is indeed a very extraordinary letter you have brought me; but it anſwers its purpoſe. I will certainly go with you now, whatever be the conſequence. No perſon ſhall ever be able to lay any blame to me, ſo long as I have it in my power to clear myſelf. So, get ready immediately!

Bleſs us, cried Thomas, this is a ſurpriſing change indeed! But I ſhould think, ſir, if you pleaſe, that there is no need of being in ſuch a devil of a hurry. It is now dark night, and I am woundy tired. Whatever it is you may have got in your head, I dare to ſay neither you nor maſter will do any thing till to-morrow.

To this remonſtrance I replied, that I would willingly conſent to a reſpite of an hour or two hours, if he deſired it, but longer than that I was determined I would not wait, and, if he were not then ready, I would proceed without him. I conceived that, in the circumſtances in which I was placed

placed by Mr. Foreſter's letter, it became me to ſhow, not merely a willingneſs, but an alacrity and impatience to return. Thomas confeſſed that it was in his orders not to part from me when I was once found, and of conſequence he was obliged to agree to the compromiſe I propoſed. We procured a ſecond horſe from the village. As we rode home, my mind was occupied again and again in endeavouring to account for Mr. Foreſter's letter; but none of my attempts were productive of ſatisfaction. I knew the inflexibility and ſternneſs of Mr. Falkland's mind in accompliſhing the purpoſes he had moſt at heart; but I alſo knew that every virtuous and magnanimous principle was congenial to his character.

When we arrived it was ſtill dark, though the greater part of the night had already elapſed. We were obliged to waken one of the ſervants to give us admittance. I found that Mr. Foreſter had left a meſſage for me in conſideration of the poſſibility of my arrival during the night, directing me immediately to go to bed, and to take care that I did not come weary and exhauſted to the buſineſs of the following day. I endeavoured to take his advice; but my ſlumbers were unrefreſhing and diſturbed. This did not diſcourage me; the ſingularity of my ſituation, my conjectures with reſpect to the preſent, my apprehenſions for the future did not allow me to think it poſſible that I could ſink into a languid and inactive ſtate.

Next morning the firſt perſon I ſaw was Mr. Foreſter. He told me that he did not yet know what Mr. Falkland had to allege againſt me, for that he had refuſed to know. He had arrived at the houſe of his brother by appointment on the preceding day to ſettle ſome indiſpenſable buſineſs, his intention having been to depart the moment the buſineſs was finiſhed, as he knew that conduct on his

his part would be moſt agreeable to Mr. Falkland. But he was no ſooner come than he found the whole houſe in confuſion, the alarm of my elopement having been given a little before. Mr. Falkland had diſpatched ſervants in all directions in purſuit of me; and the ſervant from the market town arrived at the ſame moment with Mr. Foreſter, with intelligence that a perſon anſwering to the deſcription he gave had been there very early in the morning enquiring reſpecting the ſtage to London.

Mr. Falkland ſeemed extremely diſturbed at this information, and exclaimed upon me with great acrimony as an unthankful and unnatural villain.

Mr. Foreſter replied: Have more command of yourſelf, ſir! Villain is a very ſerious appellation, and ought not to be trifled with. Engliſhmen are free; and no man ought to be charged with villainy becauſe he chooſes to change one ſource of ſubſiſtence for another.

Mr. Falkland ſhook his head, and with a ſmile expreſſive of acute ſenſibility ſaid, Brother, brother, you are the dupe of his art. For my part I always conſidered him with an eye of ſuſpicion, and was aware of his depravity. But I have juſt diſcovered——

Stop, ſir! interrupted Mr. Foreſter. I own I thought you might be employing in a moment of acrimony harſh epithets without any accurate meaning. But, if you have any ſerious accuſation to make againſt Williams, let us not be told of that, till it be known whether the poor lad is within reach of a hearing. Though a juſt man will chearfully ſuffer the ill opinion of others, he will not lightly entertain an ill opinion againſt them. For my part the ſlendereſt allowance I can make to ſuch as are unhappy enough to incur the deteſtation of their ſpecies, is that of being previouſly heard

heard in their own defence. It is a wiſe principle in Engliſh law that requires the judge to come into court totally uninformed of the merits of the cauſe he is to try; and to that principle I am determined to conform as an individual. I think it right to be ſevere and inflexible in proceeding againſt offenders, but the ſeverity I exerciſe in the ſequel ſhall always be accompanied with impartiality in the preliminary.

While Mr. Foreſter related to me theſe particulars, he obſerved me ready to break out into ſome of the expreſſions which the narrative ſuggeſted, but he would not ſuffer me to ſpeak. No, Williams, ſaid he; I would not hear Mr. Falkland againſt you; neither will I hear you in your defence. I am come to you at preſent to ſpeak, and not to hear. I thought it became me to warn you of your danger, but I have nothing more to do now. Reſerve what you have to ſay to the proper time. Make the beſt ſtory you can for yourſelf; true, if truth, as I hope, will ſerve your purpoſe; but, if not, the moſt plauſible and ingenious you can invent. That is an exertion which ſelf-defence requires from every man in caſes where, as it always happens when a man is put upon his trial, he has the whole world againſt him, and has his own battle to fight againſt the world. Farewel, and God ſend you a good deliverance! If Mr. Falkland's accuſation, whatever it be, ſhall appear to be premature, depend upon having me more zealouſly your friend than ever. If not, this is the laſt act of friendſhip you will ever receive from me!

It may be believed that this addreſs, ſo ſingular, ſo ſolemn, ſo big with conditional menace, did not greatly tend to aſſuage my anxieties. I was totally ignorant of the charge to be advanced againſt me; and not a little aſtoniſhed, when it was in my power

power to be in the moſt formidable degree the accuſer of Mr. Falkland, to find the principles of equity ſo completely reverſed, as for the innocent, but inſtructed individual, to be the party accuſed and ſuffering, inſtead of having, as was juſt, the real criminal at his mercy. I was ſtill more aſtoniſhed at the ſupernatural power Mr. Falkland ſeemed to poſſeſs of bringing back by the moſt irreſiſtible means the object of his perſecution within the ſphere of his authority; a reflection attended with ſome diſcouragement to that thirſt of independence which now conſtituted the ruling paſſion of my mind.

But this was no time for meditation. To the ſufferer the courſe of events is taken out of his direction, and he is hurried along with an irreſiſtible force, without finding it within the compaſs of his efforts to check their rapidity. I was allowed only a very ſhort time to recollect myſelf, when my trial commenced. I was conducted to the library where I had paſſed ſo many happy and ſo many contemplative hours, and found there Mr. Foreſter and three or four of the ſervants already aſſembled in expectation of me and my accuſer. Every thing was calculated to ſuggeſt to me that I muſt truſt only in the juſtice of the parties concerned, and had nothing to hope from their mercy. Mr. Falkland entered at one door, almoſt as ſoon as I entered at the other.

END OF VOL. I.